Bentains want body in drum exhumed

STORY ON PAGE A2

BIGYAN SILA NG KATARUNGAN!

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Racist message written in blood

Australian police refuse to reveal wording of message

A RACIST hate message scrawled in the victims' blood was left behind in the house of a Filipino family murdered inside their home in Sydney, Australian media reported yesterday.

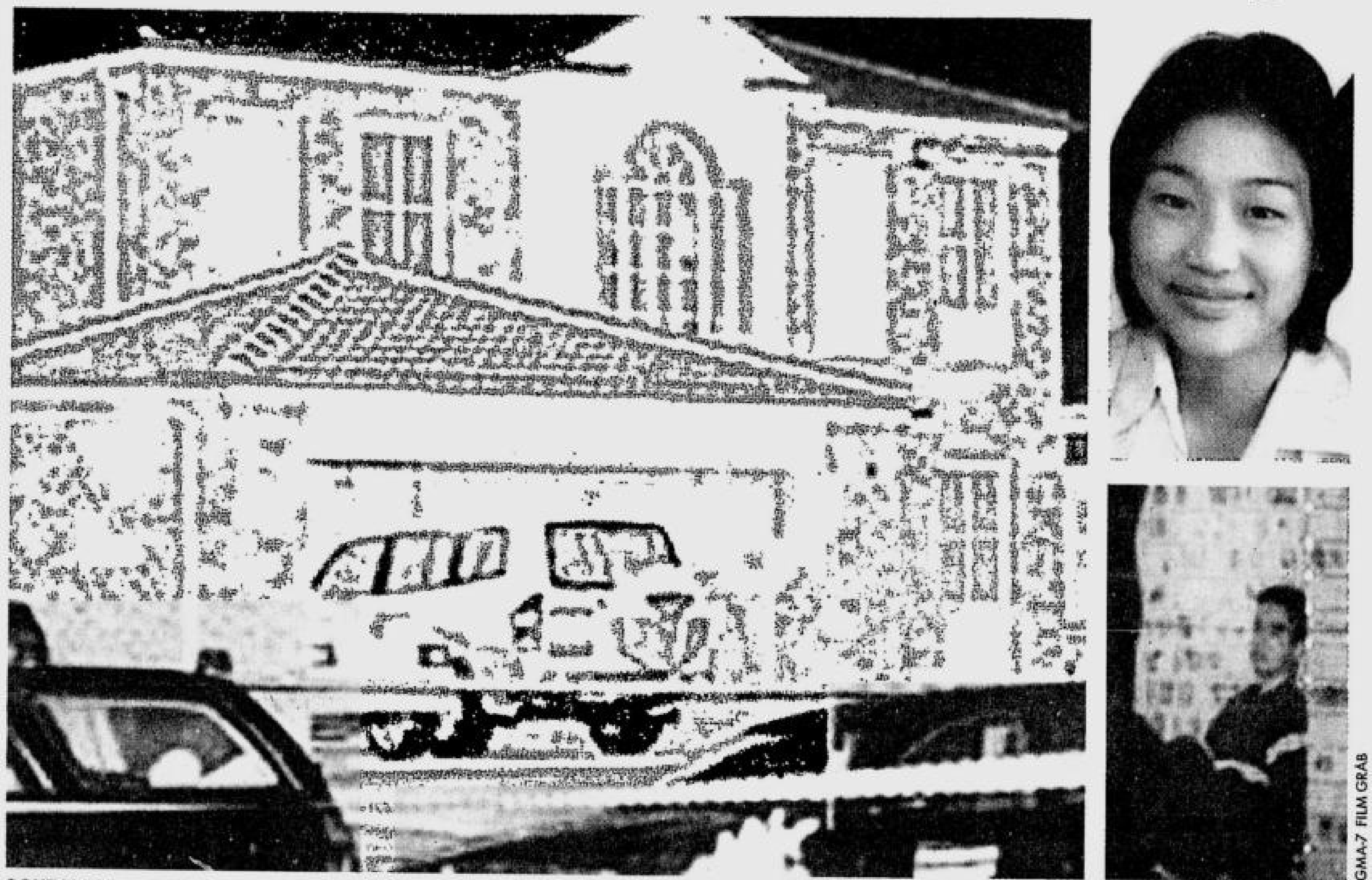
Citing police sources, Australian newspapers said the undisclosed message had been written with the blood of immigration lawyer Teddy Gonzales, 46; his wife Lowiva Claridades, 43; and their 18-year-old daughter, Clodine.

Homicide detectives, who formed Strike Force Tawas to track down the killers, yesterday remained tight-lipped about a possible motive and declined to reveal the wording of the message reportedly left on a wall close to Mrs. Gonzales' body in the living room.

The Philippine consul general in Sydney yesterday confirmed that police had found the hate scrawl but added that detectives believed that "maybe this was just (left behind) to mislead the authorities" away from the real motive for the murders.

Australian papers also reported that the detectives felt the message might have been intended to throw them off the trail and that they were more interested in finding any fingerprints or DNA material.

RACIST/ A21


GMA-7 FILM GRAB

GONZALES home (above) is in a tree-lined middle-class suburb of North Ryde in Sydney, Australia, where the family moved last December, and neighbors described the couple as "being so much in love, it was incredible to see." Too shocked (at right) to be of any help to police investigators, surviving Gonzales' son, Sef, is being counseled by a local church. Clodine, 18, (top, right), the Gonzales daughter who was found with her throat slashed.

Estradas may lose Cuevas as lawyer

By Cathy C. Yamsuan, Armand N. Nocum and Donna S. Cueto

CRIMINAL defendants Joseph and Jinggoy Estrada may soon lose one heck of a top-notch lawyer.

Government prosecutors plan to question former Justice Secretary Serafin Cuevas' appearance as defense counsel of the former President and his son in their plunder case before the Sandiganbayan.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday said the law bars retired judicial officers who are receiving state pensions from serving as counsel to parties in court cases where the government is the plaintiff or defendant.

This prohibition covers former justices of both the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals, Perez said, noting that Cuevas has served in both tribunals.

After Estrada's plunder arraignment on Tuesday, according to Perez, the justice secretary was approached by a former Supreme Court justice who pointed out that the prohibition is spelled out in Republic Act 910.

ESTRADAS/ A18

Palace still bullish despite weakening peso

MALACAÑANG yesterday reaffirmed its bullish economic growth forecast despite a weakening peso that slid to a five-and-half month low of P53.40 against the dollar before closing at P53.08.

(The INQUIRER erroneously reported on Page 1 that the peso closed at P53.65 to $1 on Wednesday. It actually closed at P53.065.)

The Palace is apparently putting on a brave front after Singapore announced on Wednesday that its economy had shrunk for the second straight quarter, meeting the widely accepted definition of recession.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the government was sticking to its gross domestic product growth target of 3.3 percent to 3.8 percent this year because the economy still had momentum.

"Unless there is a major crash in the United States or Japan we think we will still hit the 3.3 (to 3.8 percent) target," Tiglao told reporters.

Tiglao was speaking on the eve of a planned announcement by President Macapagal-Arroyo of bold initiatives to lift the economy, which is reeling from the slide in exports and a host of homegrown problems.

The spokesperson was coy on Arroyo's plans but promised a "major announcement" of both economic and political measures.

The government lowered its growth target in June by half a percentage point, but the International Monetary Fund and a number of leading investment banks believe the government is still being too optimistic.

Global demand for the country's main export, electronics, has slumped. The weak demand for electronics has pushed Singapore, a major electronics producer, into recession.

Though confident that the Philippines would escape recession, Tiglao conceded that the government's room for maneuver was limited by global and regional pressures.

Declining exports is putting pressure on the peso, boosting inflation and reducing the scope for lower interest rates, while investment is anemic because of worries over law and order.

PALACE/ A20

PPC solons on brink of breakup

By Christine Avendaño, Armand Nocum and Gerald G. Lacuarta

BOTH HOUSES of Congress now stand divided.

In the Senate, the already fragmented People Power Coalition (PPC) could be on the verge of a breakup after Sen. Franklin Drilon shot down yesterday a power-sharing scheme to resolve the issue of the Senate presidency.

Ironically, the scheme proposed by Vice President Teofisto Guingona was aimed to prevent the disintegration of the PPC, which has a majority in the Senate.

In the Lower House, the speakership is no longer in the bag for Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia. Sixty congressmen have crossed party lines to form an alliance to work for the election of Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad and upset De Venecia's comeback.

But of the two Houses, the Senate is the more chaotic. Two other blocs have emerged within the PPC led by Drilon's rivals, Sen. Rene Cayetano and Sen. Joker Arroyo. The Senate leadership is really a toss-up between Cayetano and Arroyo, according to an insider of one of the blocs.

PPC/ A20

Military questions MNLF: Whose side are you on?

By Julie Alipala-Inot
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ISABELA CITY, Basilan—Four members of the Moro National Liberation Front were wounded in a six-hour clash with government troops in Lantawan town Wednesday, prompting a military official to wonder where the MNLF's loyalty lies. Maj. Alberto Gepilano, civil-military operations officer of Joint Task Force Comet, said soldiers belonging to the 10th Infantry Brigade clashed with Abu Sayyaf bandits under Commander Isnilon Hapilon, but that when the troops reached Barangay Matikang, they encountered an MNLF group under Commander Boy Colot.

Gepilano said an investigation should be conducted to clarify which side the MNLF was on. The group signed a peace accord with the government in 1996.

"Every time there's an engagement with the extremists, (the MNLF comes into) the picture," he said.

Gepilano denied that the clash was a "misencounter."

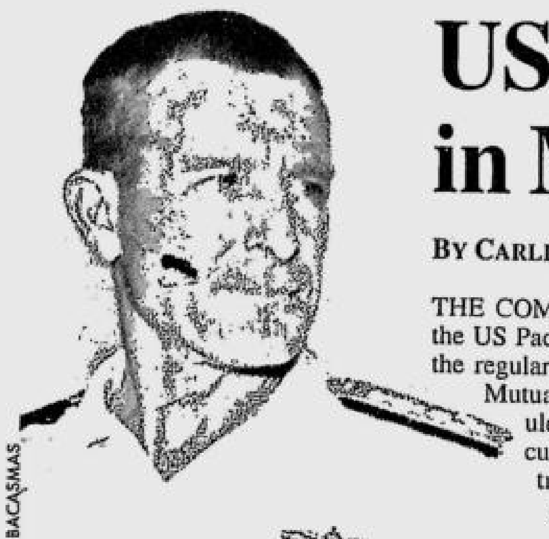
"Our troops were pursuing the Abu Sayyaf," he said. "When they reached MNLF Camp Mardika, they thought they were going to get support considering that (MNLF members) are allied forces. But to their surprise, they were also fired upon. So our troops were forced to retaliate."

Gepilano identified the wounded MNLF members as Ibno Maamo, Sawi Tapsi, Indam Liwana and a certain Mautul.

But Bashir Jailani, MNLF national security command chief, said the attack on the camp also killed two MNLF farmers and displaced hundreds of villagers.

In Manila, Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta Jr. said that apart from the clash in Matikang, three other armed encounters occurred in the town of Lamitan on Wednesday.

MILITARY/ A20


EDWIN BACASMAS

US NAVY Adm. Dennis Blair, commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet: sharing intelligence on Abu crisis.

US Pacific Fleet commander in Manila; Basilan on agenda

By Carlito Pablo

THE COMMANDER in Chief of the US Pacific Fleet is in town for the regular meeting of the RP-US Mutual Defense Board scheduled today, as well as discussions on the two countries' sharing of intelligence information in connection with the hostage crisis in Basilan.

Adm. Dennis Blair, whose command covers almost half of the world, arrived on an official three-day visit on Wednesday. On that day, a series of gun battles flared up in Basilan between government forces and the Abu Sayyaf, which is holding at least 21 hostages including American couple Martin and Gracia Burnham.

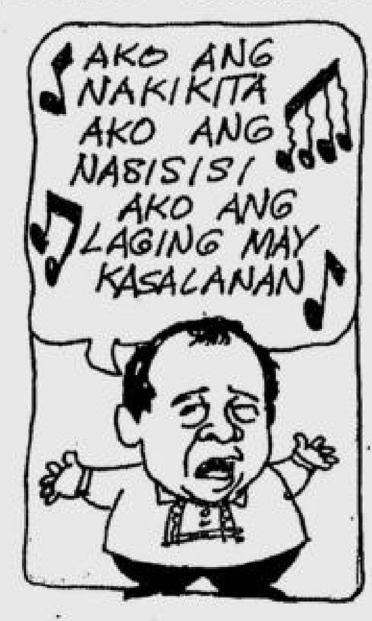
Blair is scheduled to call on President Macapagal-Arroyo after the MDB meeting in Camp Aguinaldo.

"There will be discussions on areas where, in terms of sharing intelligence information, the Americans can assist in resolving this hostage situation," Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said yesterday.

"I'm sure that at the operational level, the concern of the United States over the safety of the hostages is understandable," he said.

Reyes and Blair met yesterday in Camp Aguinaldo where, the Philippine defense chief said, they "discussed areas that could be explored for the advancement of the mutual interest of both parties and both armed forces."

US/ A18



Jimenez wails: Why me?

By Cathy Yamsuan and Armand N. Nocum

MARK JIMENEZ is wondering why the government pays so much attention to his extradition case when it should mind serious matters like economic and law and order problems.

"You do not need to be a

JIMENEZ/ A18

Second FRONT PAGE

ALAMIN KAAGAD!

Bentains want body in drum exhumed

By Christian V. Esguerra and Alcuin Papa

THE FAMILY of missing casino employee Edgar Bentain wants to exhume a body in a steel drum that was found in Lubao, Pampanga, in 1997 and reburied when no one came to claim it.

Bentain's brother, Edcel, said yesterday National Bureau of Investigation agents will accompany Dante Jimenez of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) and himself to Lubao this week to dig up the drum.

The drum was reportedly found by the town's residents in 1997. Its discovery was reported to the police who recorded the incident.

Later, when no one came forward to claim the body, it was reportedly reburied in the drum by a funeral homes worker named Patrick whose whereabouts are now unknown. The NBI is reportedly looking for Patrick to shed some light in the case.

Edcel said he and his family are convinced the remains in the drum are those of his brother, based on recent revelations made by Angelo Mawanay, a.k.a. Ador, who claimed to have taken part in Bentain's abduction and murder.

Mawanay said Bentain was killed because he released a videotape showing then presidential candidate Joseph Estrada playing baccarat at a hotel casino.

He named then national police chief Sen. Panfilo Lacson as the man who gave the order to abduct and kill Bentain. He said Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino and Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao, Lacson's trusted subordinates, oversaw the operation.

Mawanay claimed Bentain was forced into a steel drum and buried alive near a bridge in Bacolor, Pampanga after he was abducted from the Grand Boulevard Hotel casino where he worked on Jan. 16, 1999.

"We are convinced Edgar is the man buried in the drum," Edcel told the Inquirer in an interview.

Orlando Dizon, NBI director for Central Luzon, had said the drum could not have contained Bentain's remains since it was dug up in 1997, or two years before Bentain went missing.

But the Bentains and Jimenez believe the date of recovery might have been tampered with in the records of the Lubao police.

"It's highly possible those behind Edgar's murder connived with or threatened some people in Lubao to change the entry to mislead the investigation," Jimenez told the Inquirer in an interview.

Edcel said a description of the man in the drum as told to him by NBI agents "matched" his brother.

"Once we have ascertained the body is Edgar's, we will file charges against those behind his kidnapping and murder," Edcel said.

Wednesday, the "Justice for Bentain Movement" was launched with civil society groups forming a seven-man legal team to prosecute Bentain's killers.

The team is led by Leonardo de Vera of the Equal Justice for All Movement and includes Jose Grapilon, former president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines; Ataniones Bacale, also of the IBP; Dennis Funa and Nic Conti of the Concerned Lawyers for Moral and Effective Leadership, JV Bautista of Sanlakas and Argee Guevarra of ARM-Lawyers. The team also represents Mawanay.

De Vera said they would ask President Macapagal-Arroyo to seek the help of countries with modern equipment in the search for Bentain's body.

De Vera said the assistance from countries like Japan, South Korea and the United States could come in the form of metal detectors and satellite imaging that could find a body in a drum buried in lahar.

"We might need to use metal detectors or satellite imaging to find that drum and these countries have the capability for that," De Vera said.

He said if the drum was not found, the first-hand testimony of Mawanay might suffice to convict the accused as long as his credibility as a witness is established.

"We need to find corroborative evidence to establish his (Mawanay's) presence at the scene of the crime," De Vera said.

De Vera said he and the other lawyers, who grilled Mawanay over last weekend, said they will stand by the former agent for as long as he is telling the truth.

"As long as he has not shown he is telling a lie, we will stand by him. If we find that he is lying, we ourselves will tell the public," he said.

GMA lauds new P16B cigarette plant, while health chief snubs rites

By J. Javellana

STO. TOMAS, Batangas—Even though her health secretary skipped the groundbrea-king rites for its state-of-the-art P16-billion cigarette manufacturing facility here, President Macapagal-Arroyo hailed Philip Morris as a "socially conscious" cigarette manufacturer and welcomed its investment in the country.

Ms Macapagal was all praises for the decision of Philip Morris, the world's biggest cigarette company, to locate its "Asian jewel" in the country despite the recent negative publicity the Philippines has been generating.

The $300-million facility, to be set up on a 25-hectare lot at the First Philippine Industrial Park, will be fully operational by 2003 and will become Philip Morris' regional hub. It will manufacture Marlboro and Philip Morris cigarettes to be sold around Asia.

Flying in from Tabaco, Albay, where she checked into the condition of Mt. Mayon evacuees, the President said the groundbreaking was "an important event not just for Philip Morris but for the Philippine economy."

"To those who are saying the Philippine economy is going down, listen to this—P16 billion in new investments," she said in her speech.

"How is that for an expression of support and faith in the investment climate in the Philippines?" she said.

George Farrah, Philip Morris Philippines managing director, and Philip Morris Asia president Duck Song said their choice of the Philippines for the company's regional hub was an affirmation of their faith in its economy.

"Our manufacturing plant... is the biggest investment by Philip Morris in Asia and it is a clear manifestation of Philip Morris' long-term confidence in the Philippines," Farrah said in his speech.

"We are here to stay. We have a stake in the success and development of the country and we hope to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the Filipino people," Farrah said.

Farrah admitted, however, that Philip Morris manufactures and sells a "risky product."

"Madame President, ladies and gentlemen, we do realize that we are manufacturing and selling a risky product and that is why we firmly believe that cigarette smoking is a decision adults and only adults should make," Farrah said.

"As a responsible corporate citizen, we are firmly committed to respond to society's concerns both in the Philippines and worldwide regarding smoking," he added.

Philip Morris is one of the companies ordered to pay an unprecedented $3 billion in punitive damages to cancer-stricken Richard Boeken in the US.

In November 1998, 46 US states endorsed a $206-billion settlement for cigarette smokers who contracted lung cancer and other smoking-related ailments.

In her speech, the President revealed how Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit intentionally avoided joining her at the groundbreaking rites.

She said Dayrit was with her in Albay, along with Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman and Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor, but somehow was "unable to find his way" to the Philip Morris event.

Former President Fidel Ramos and local officials of Batangas were present at the 1:15 p.m. rites.

"But after we heard from you today, I think the government can express its support and endorsement of Philip Morris' program to prevent smoking by the youth and I urge Philip Morris to coordinate closely with (Dayrit) to find ways of expanding the scope of the Youth Smoking-Prevention Program (YSPP) so that next time h[illegible]n't mind coming here to see the jobs that you are creating," Ms Macapagal said.

Farrah explained that Philip Morris has implemented the YSPP to "keep cigarettes away from children."

In the Philippines, he said Philip Morris is working with various institutions, including educators, retailers and the cigarette industry to promote programs that will discourage the young from smoking.

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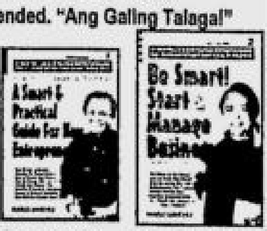
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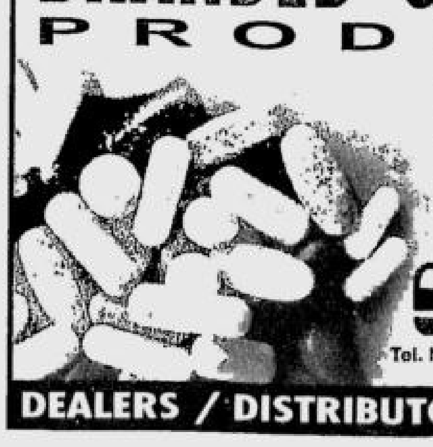

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Comelec rushes to beat proclamation deadline

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

BICKERING officials of the Commission on Elections have decided to set aside their differences in order to beat a self-imposed deadline "before July 23" when they would proclaim all the winning party-list representatives and settle who between Sen. Gregorio Honasan and Sen. Ralph Recto should get the longer term.

Chairman Alfredo Benipayo said the Comelec en banc has agreed to reconvene the National Board of Canvassers (NBC) next week to finalize the party-list canvass and the senatorial tally, both of which have dragged on for nearly two months now.

Benipayo said the NBC would first have to settle the question of which among the winning party-list groups are qualified to sit in the House of Representatives based on the eight guidelines set by the Supreme Court.

The SC gave the Comelec only until July 29 to wrap up hearings but Benipayo said the poll body was rushing to have the winners proclaimed before the opening of the 12th Congress on July 23.

"I think the idea is to be able to submit a report before the 23rd because of the opening of the session," Benipayo said.

As for the Senate tally, Benipayo said that while all 13 winning senators have been proclaimed, the NBC still has to determine who were the 12th and 13th placers, based on the final canvass.

As of the latest count on June 4, Recto had 10,387,108 votes while Honasan had 10,364,272, but these did not include the votes from Lanao del Sur which had been questioned by the Puwersa ng Masa.

Benipayo said the NBC will have to resolve four petitions filed by PnM lawyer Rufus Rodriguez contesting a total of 180,000 votes for Recto, including 30,000 padded votes in Zamboanga del Norte which were not deducted from his tally despite an NBC order.

"We have completed the canvass up to Lanao del Sur and our people are now preparing the audited report," Benipayo said.

Rodriguez, who had urged the NBC to resolve the petitions before the start of the senators' terms on June 30, lauded the Comelec's decision to finally reconvene the NBC after much delay.

"This means the Comelec hasn't totally gone to the dogs yet," Rodriguez said. "But it should be consistent in its actions by reopening the certificates of canvass in the areas under question as it had earlier done in four provinces."

Divorce bill filed in House

IN A MOVE sure to encounter tough opposition from the Church, Aurora Rep. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo has filed a bill that would allow "absolute divorce" and grant the separated spouses the right to remarry.

Castillo filed House Bill 878, which seeks to amend the Family Code and provide absolute divorce as an alternative to a failed marriage.

Her bill serves as a counterpart measure to a similar bill filed by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon in the Senate.

Ironically, Biazon's son, new Muntinlupa Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon, was most vocal in opposing the bill, saying it could lead to the destruction of the moral fiber of society.

"(Sen. Biazon) may be my father but that does not mean we always have to agree on issues," the young Biazon said.

"This bill seeks to give spouses who are shackled by an irretrievably broken marriage the freedom to remarry and possibly succeed in attaining a stable and fulfilling family life," Castillo said.

In an argument that would surely draw debates in society, Castillo said that in this day and age, "not all marriages succeed as a permanent union."

Castillo said there has been an increasing number of married individuals who find themselves subjected to "physical violence, grossly abusive conduct and other acts or offenses" by their partners. *Rocky Nazareno*

Tan cause of delay –PCGG

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government yesterday accused businessman Lucio Tan of delaying the sequestration case against him by asking to see documents in the government's possession.

Commissioner Ruben Carranza Jr. said the PCGG was not compelled to show Tan the documents it had in its possession that it would use to prosecute the sequestration case against the tycoon.

Carranza said the PCGG had sought a reversal of the Sandiganbayan ruling allowing Tan to have access to the sequestration papers.

"That's not true," Carranza said of Tan's accusation. "How can he complain that we are delaying the proceedings when he is actually the one delaying it?"

Tan has accused the PCGG of refusing to present the sequestration papers on Allied Bank Inc., Maranao Hotels and Resort Corp., Sipalay Trading Corp., Fortune Tobacco Corp., Shareholdings Inc., Foremost Farms, Virginia Tobacco Redrying and Northern Tobacco Redrying Co. Inc.

Blanche S. Rivera

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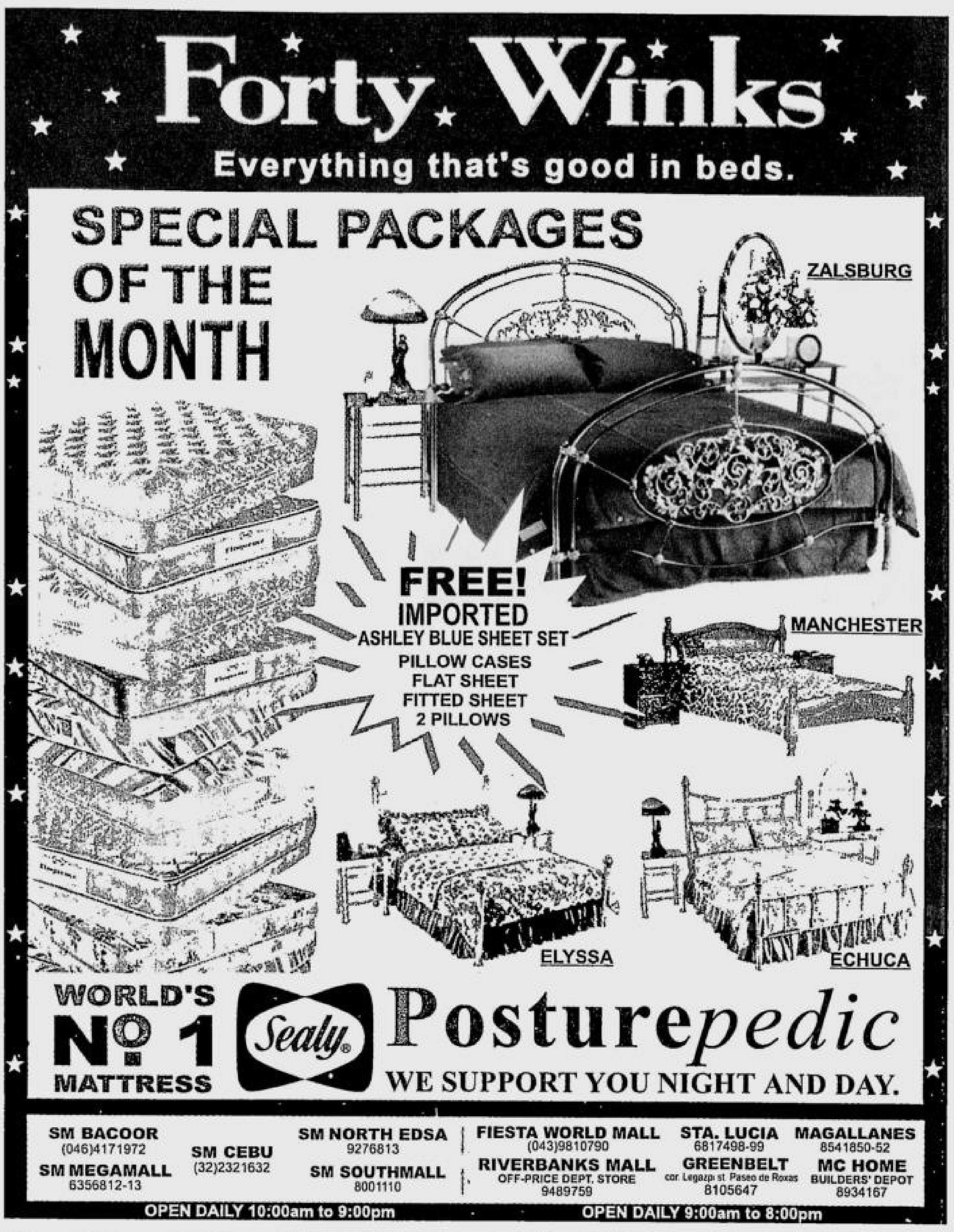
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For not using up loans, DECS nearly loses ₱12B

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE DEPARTMENT of Education, Culture and Sports nearly lost a P12-billion school building loan fund from the World Bank and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation after the two agencies found out that past DECS administrations had hardly used the loans available to them.

Education Secretary Raul Roco said the DECS had to "renegotiate" with the World Bank and the JBIC for the foreign donors to continue funding the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP).

Roco said the two agencies were "shocked" by a report that the DECS had not used the P2 billion allotted every year for the construction of classrooms.

He said the loans had in effect been "wasted" by past DECS administrations because they were not maximized despite the pressing need for more schools in the country.

"The money is intact, there's no problem with that," Roco said in a phone interview. "What is shocking is it was hardly used, so the (school building) project was not really implemented."

He said the commitment fee paid by the government was bigger than the actual portions of the loans that were used by the DECS to build and repair classrooms for public high schools.

The commitment fee is the fine paid by the government for the loan fund made available by the bank but which the borrower, in this case the DECS, is not utilizing.

The TEEP is a project for public high schools spread over seven years and funded by a P12-billion soft loan from the World Bank and the JBIC. It would cover the years 1997-2004.

A recent report showed the DECS under former secretaries Ricardo Gloria and Bro. Andrew Gonzalez used only $318,908 in loans over three years, while the government had to pay around P70 million in commitment fees alone.

The school building program under the TEEP had been allocated $38.4 million to be used for repairs and construction of classrooms.

"They wanted to withdraw their funding because their money was not earning interest, so we had to renegotiate," Roco said.

The DECS chief met with representatives of the World Bank and JBIC two months ago for a thorough discussion of the status of the TEEP.

The DECS on Tuesday relaunched the TEEP, targeting the construction of 1,617 classrooms and the repair of 3,150 to benefit around 240,000 students.

"We're now involving the principals. We've given them manuals so they would know how the work is progressing," Roco said, adding the construction timetable has been reduced to 90 days compared to at least 300 days in the previous years.

Only two classrooms were built in 1999 while 272 were built and 427 repaired last year, compared to an initial target of 1,190 constructed and 2,252 repaired.

Probe of House OT pay ordered

THE TOP administrative official of the House of Representatives has ordered a "full-dress investigation" into alleged overtime pay irregularities at the chamber's media affairs office.

House secretary general Roberto Nazareno said he will create an investigating team composed of officials from the administrative and personnel divisions to probe the granting of allegedly excessive overtime pay to at least seven employees of the Media Affairs and Public Information Service (Mapis).

"We will look into these alleged irregularities, especially now that the government is undertaking austerity measures to cope with its money problems," Nazareno said.

Mapis director Celine Marie Buencamino also took exception to reports that Miguel Genovea, earlier reported to be Mapis head, was connected with the department.

In a letter faxed to the INQUIRER, Buencamino said "Mr. Genovea was a consultant in the Office of the Speaker and the employees alluded to in the article, although categorized as Mapis staff, have not been reporting to this office."

"We hope we can put a stop to this practice of unauthorized overtime pay by certain quarters—a practice not condoned by this office or this institution, particularly at a time of national austerity," she said.

A Mapis statement said the erring employees "have not been reporting to Mapis and are currently under investigation for insubordination and other possible violations of civil service rules and regulations."

"The attention of (these) employees had, in fact, been called even prior to the publication of any report on this matter," said the statement.

Genovea had explained that the huge overtime pay collected by Mapis personnel was justified because they had been assigned to monitor radio, TV and print coverage of Congress during the term of Speaker Manuel Villar.

It was noted, however, that the overtime pay, ranging from P20,000 to P30,000, were all drawn in the month of May when Congress was closed. *Rocky Nazareno*

Day in court looms for Imelda Marcos

By Donna S. Cueto

FORMER first lady Imelda Marcos may soon have to testify in court, or at least submit her explanation, in the civil suit filed by the government in 1989 to recover the alleged Marcos ill-gotten wealth.

In a four-page resolution, the Sandiganbayan's fourth division denied Ms Marcos' motion for reconsideration, saying it was based on "erroneous assumptions." The court said its earlier subpoena for her to testify still stood.

The court cited her own admission that her husband, the late President Ferdinand Marcos, had indeed acquired the subject properties in the complaint, particularly the P12.374-million worth of shares in the Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co. and stock in Prime Holdings Inc.

The complaint also mentioned bank deposits here and abroad, real properties in Leyte and the US, investments in mining and other corporations, crates and suitcases of jewelry and US currency, and evening gowns and other vanity items.

Ms Marcos claimed that she did not give any self-incriminating evidence when she made these admissions, arguing that she did not say that the properties were ill-gotten.

The court said that by her own admission contained in her answer to the court about the properties, she had "expressly waived" her right against self-incrimination.

Ms Marcos said that since her cross-claim to the PLDT shares had been rejected by the court, she could not be required to "testify on her (earlier) claim."

"The cross-claim of Ms Marcos relative to the PLDT shares had been denied by this honorable court. Requiring Ms Marcos to testify on her claim is both oppressive and unjust," read her motion for reconsideration filed on June 22.

Ms Marcos had asked the court to reconsider its resolution of May 4, 2001 which required her to testify in court on the case.

"In the remote possibility that the instant motion for reconsideration is denied, defendant Marcos moves that plaintiff be directed to furnish her a request for stipulation so that she can properly respond thereto without having to appear personally and testify on the case," said her lawyers in the motion.

The court said that the prosecution should not propound any question, outside of the admission made by Ms Marcos on some of the acquired properties of the late strongman, that might violate her right against self-incrimination, upon proper and timely objection.

"We find no cogent reason to disturb our resolution of May 4, 2001, and the subpoena, dated Feb. 16, 2001," the court's resolution dated July 10 said.

"Wherefore, defendant Imelda Marcos' motion for reconsideration dated 19 June 2001 is hereby denied and the subpoena earlier issued stand(s)," it said.

But it said that in lieu of the testimony of the defendant in court, the prosecution could make use of the provisions in Rule 26 of the Revised Rules on Civil Procedure, which provides for an admission by an adverse party through written requests.

Saudia executive beats deportation

IMMIGRATION authorities at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport had sought the deportation of an executive of Saudia Airlines who tried to intercede in behalf of seven Arab nationals who were barred from entering the country.

But Abdullah Alazhari, station manager of Saudi Airlines at the Naia, was able to show that all his working papers were in order, thus stopping immigration agents in their tracks.

BI agents had alleged Alazhari did not have a working or employment visa, a clear violation of the country's immigration laws.

They said Alazhari, 35, had been authorized to stay in the country only 21 days, thus they arrested him and took him to the Bureau of Immigration office for further investigation.

Crescencio Ablan, intelligence chief of the BI at Naia, had asked Commissioner Andrea Domingo to issue a warrant for the deportation of Alazhari, citing his failure to secure a working visa.

Alazhari, however, was able to show that his request for a working permit was pending at the BI main office.

Investigation showed that on July 6, Alazhari showed up at the immigration office and questioned the banning of the seven Arab nationals from the country.

Incensed by his interference, the immigration officers ignored him and booked the seven on a return flight to Riyadh.

Leonardo Cabanting, deputy immigration supervisor at Naia, ordered the exclusion of the Arabs after they could not justify their visit to Mindanao, the base of operations of Muslim extremist groups.

TJ Burgonio

S. Tagalog mass transit link mulled

TO DECONGEST Metro Manila, the Macapagal administration will build a mass transport system that would link the Southern Tagalog provinces to the metropolis.

President Macapagal-Arroyo gave this "preview" yesterday of some of the proposals contained in the State of the Nation Address she would deliver during the joint opening of Congress on July 23.

"There are so many urban poor people in Metro Manila, so we would have to decongest it by bringing a portion of the metro population to the Calabarzon area," the President said in her speech during groundbreaking rites for the P16-billion Philip Morris cigarette factory at the First Philippine Industrial Park in Sto. Tomas, Batangas, yesterday.

Ms Macapagal said the relocation of the poor would not be mandatory. *Juliet L. Javellana*

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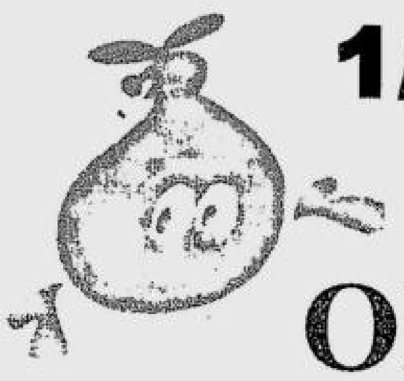

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First Gent gets lesson on bad urban planning

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ARROYO commiserates with Emiliana Collano, 43, who lost her home when typhoon Feria devastated Baguio City. TOOTS SOBERANO

BAGUIO CITY—First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo got his first hard look at bad urban planning Thursday, courtesy of the more dramatic disaster sites in Baguio which were triggered by last week's killer-typhoon "Feria."

Arroyo visited a Kennon Road neighborhood, site of a mudslide that spilled from an abandoned subdivision development project and killed several families.

He also visited the City Camp Lagoon, a decades-old, flood-prone area that was again buried in 15 feet of floodwater last week.

Arroyo ended his tour at the Pinsao community of Josephine Albon, a barangay leader who lost her life in a July 4 rescue mission.

These areas had been devastated by calamities, which the city had already foreseen due to their geological characteristics as well as their potentials as public hazards, the Office of Civil Defense said.

Abra hardest hit

The city's death toll has reached 35, according to the OCD.

Among the Cordillera provinces, Abra was the hardest hit, it said. Access to Abra was cut when the Quirino Bridge leading to towns in Northern Luzon was swept away by flood.

Feria's rains spawned floods that killed 17 people in Abra and displaced 36,638 families. Sixteen others were still missing.

The typhoon submerged two barangays, damaged 5,578 houses and destroyed crops worth P106.58 million, the OCD noted in a report submitted to Arroyo.

Arroyo is expected to collate these one-site assessments for President Macapagal-Arroyo, his spokespersons said.

Arroyo also checked up on his residence on Pacdal Road here before reviewing the damages that Feria wrought on the Mansion, the presidential official summer residence.

"The windows were shattered by the wind, and many of our trees fell. The typhoon was very furious," said Anne Bistuyong, the Mansion's overseer.

Refuge

The Arroyo residence survived with barely a smudge, prompting the First Gentleman to offer it as a temporary refuge to typhoon victims here.

Arroyo, wearing a bright red and collared T-shirt, a pair of slacks and leather shoes, struggled through soft mud and climbed an alley leading to the home of Fernando Rojo.

Rojo lost a wife to a slide. His neighbors fared no better. Cris Uyao and his family were buried neck deep in mud. His wife was immediately swallowed by mud, although his two children managed to escape.

Cris himself had to be dug out by neighbors. But his neighbors lamented that Cris died in the hospital upon learning of his wife's fate.

Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan briefed Arroyo about the area's geology. They were also joined by Vice Mayor Betty Lourdes Tabanda.

Arroyo's attention was always riveted at the head of a mountain where the abandoned Taipan subdivision area remains untended. Thatches of loose vegetation clung to loose earth, where the subdivision developer had bulldozed its waste materials.

Subdivision project

Leonora Alfonso, a resident, said the community had complained about the subdivision because of the dangers it posed, but the government failed to act on them.

The National Housing Authority shut down the subdivision due to technical violations 10 years ago, but the government failed to reinforce the site, Alfonso said.

Victor Tomazar, OCD director for the Cordillera, said the Kennon Road tragedy displayed the city's inability to deal with its geological and engineering vulnerabilities.

Tomazar acknowledged a geological evaluation that traced most landslides and abnormal flooding in the city to natural drainage systems, which were obstructed by squatter colonies and unregulated urban development projects.

Several of these concerns were detailed in reports to City Hall by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, but these were ignored.

"These are scenarios that cannot be excused by citing Feria as an abnormal typhoon. We have had the same problems before, and we could have responded to them already. Drains, whether they are government regulated or not, are really small details which can mean big things for a community. This should not have been ignored," Tomazar said in Filipino.

The geological evaluation was made last week by Neoman dela Cruz, MGB regional director.

Slum colonies

Feria had broken records for generating the most rainfall, according to Joseph Rios. chief of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration office here.

An OCD official also noted that most of the subdivisions and squatter colonies, sprouted in the city following the July 16, 1990 earthquake.

"I don't know what this detail means, but you can check from all housing records. Subdivisions began to grow after the quake. The squatters were allowed to grow after the quake. But no one had stepped in to mitigate their growth with clear drainage and sewer systems, or even to eject houses lying on hazardous areas. The city has this authority, you know," the official said.

Tomazar said he has scheduled a dialogue on Saturday, July 14, with engineers in the city to help map out a solution to Baguio's landslides. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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China asks RP to keep visit of Taiwan minister unofficial

TAIWAN Economic Minister Lin Hsin-yi visits a Taiwanese trade fair in Makati City. AP

CHINA yesterday asked the Philippine government to keep a visit of a Taiwanese minister at a "non-political and unofficial level," reminding Manila to adhere to its one-China policy.

Taiwanese Economic Minister Lin Hsin-yi arrived in Manila on Wednesday for a conference with Trade Secretary Mar Roxas II on ways to expand trade between the two Asian countries.

"The Chinese side believes the Philippine side will keep its commitment and will handle the relative question properly and restrict the Philippine-Taiwan contact to the non-political and unofficial level," said Wang Luo, a spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy.

"We hope and believe that the Philippine government will honor its commitment on its one-China policy," she said.

The meetings between Lin and Roxas began Thursday at the government's Department of Trade and Industry building.

Lin also visited a Taiwanese trade fair, where a Taiwanese flag was displayed, posing before television cameras while inspecting products ranging from hair clips and coffeepots to industrial equipment.

He planned to visit Taiwanese factories in what could be one of the most high profile visits by a Taiwanese government official in recent years to the Philippines.

Asked to react to the Chinese Embassy statement, Lin said his trip was official but non-political.

"What we have here is basically economic cooperation and trade activities. We will not touch on anything political," said Lin, speaking through an interpreter.

Lin is also leading nearly 50 Taiwanese businessmen looking for investment opportunities in the Philippines. He will return home Saturday.

Lin said he was to find ways of expanding bilateral relations in the areas of fishing, agriculture and investment.

China opposes any official exchanges with Taiwan by countries with which Beijing has diplomatic relations.

China claims Taiwan is a breakaway province with no right to foreign relations. The Philippines has diplomatic relations with Beijing, but maintains strong unofficial and economic ties with Taipei.

Taiwan, however, has a large business presence in the Philippines and is one of the country's largest investors. Two-way trade between the Philippines and Taiwan amounted to $6.5 billion last year.

Lin praised the Philippine government for taking steps to make the country an attractive investment but said Taiwanese businessmen were concerned over the stability of water and power supply and labor unrest.

He also warned that demands for steep wage increases might result in company closures.

"You can't kill the hen for her eggs," Lin said.

Jeffrey Koo, a prominent Taiwanese businessman, said the Philippines should strive to be more competitive, noting it is closer to Taiwan but gets considerably less Taiwanese investment than nearby Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam.

Taiwan's trade mission will also visit Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

Taiwan, with one of Asia's wealthiest economies, is intensifying trade ties with Southeast Asia amid an economic slowdown. Its currency hit a 15-year low and the stock market sustained setbacks this week.

Lin said he expected the Taiwanese economy to recover, but added the Taiwanese government would not intervene to strengthen the Taiwanese dollar.

Lin's visit came a day after the Philippine government said it planned to strengthen its coordination with China to stop the huge flow of illegal drugs coming from that country.

Miguel Coronel, executive director of the National Drug Law Enforcement and Coordinating Center, told a news conference on Tuesday that China was the biggest source of the stimulant methamphetamine hydrochloride, or "shabu," in the country.

He said 75 percent of foreign drug traffickers arrested in the Philippines in the past three years were from China. Of the 30 foreigners arrested in the Philippines this year, 20 were from China.

In March, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said the illegal drug trade in the Philippines was worth P260 billion a year and about 95 percent of the drugs, mostly shabu, came from China. ***Reports from AP and Reuters***

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, July 13, 2001
14th Week in Ordinary Time1st
Reading: Gen 46:1-7, 28-30
Gospel: Mt 10:16-23

Jesus said to his disciples, "Look, I send you out like sheep among wolves. You must be clever as snakes and innocent as doves. Be on your guard with respect to people, for they will hand you over to their courts and they will flog you in their synagogues. You will be brought to trial before rulers and kings because of me, and so you may witness to them and the pagans.

But when you are arrested, do not worry about what you are to say and how you are to say it; when the hour comes, you will be given what you are to say. For it is not you who will speak; but it will be the Spirit of your Father in you.

Brother will hand over brother to death, and a father his child; children will turn against parents and have them put to death. Everyone will hate you because of me, but whoever stands firm to the end will be saved.

When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next. For sure, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes."

Commentary:

Just as Jesus met with strong opposition, so the disciples had to brace themselves for the very same opposition to happen during their mission. They will be hated by all. This hatred will come not only from outside the community, but even from inside the very family. Exactly at the center of the description of the two kinds of persecution, Matthew places the promise of the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Contrary to popular perception, the evangelist wants the persecutions to be understood as moments of grace and points out the cleansing effect of persecution on the disciples. It is a privileged time when the Spirit of the Father will speak through them.

Father, we are easily confused when we are invited to share in the suffering of Jesus. Grant us faith and serenity to accept our cross every day.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Credibility of witness—As a general rule, the evaluation of the credibility of witnesses is a matter that particularly falls within the authority of the trial court, as it had the opportunity to observe the demeanor of the witnesses on the stand. For this reason, appellate courts accord its factual findings and assessments of witnesses with great weight and even finality, barring arbitrariness or oversight of some fact or circumstance of weight and substance. In this case, the trial court found complainant credible and her testimony truthful. Appellant has not shown any sufficient reason to overturn this assessment. Indeed, complainant, in a clear and straightforward manner, narrated how she had been raped by appellant. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Panganiban, First Division, People v. Bantayan, G.R. No. 137693, December 14, 2000]

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Supreme Court dismisses judge for illicit affair with woman

BY J. NAPALLACAN
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A Cebu judge and namesake of the late dictator Fedinand Marcos was dismissed from the service after the Supreme Court found him guilty of immorality for having an illicit affair with a woman.

The high tribunal also barred Ferdinand J. Marcos from holding any position in government corporations and ordered the forfeiture of his retirement benefits.

In its July 6 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that Marcos was unfit to remain as Regional Trial Court judge and "has demonstrated himself to be wanting of moral integrity."

"He has violated the Code of Judicial Conduct, which requires every judge to be the embodiment of competence, integrity and independence and to avoid the appearance of impropriety in all activities as to promote public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary," the decision said.

The decision was signed by 11 justices, including Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., who personally saw Marcos with his partner during a fun jog participated in by judges and court employees at the Cebu City Sports Complex last year.

The four justices who did not sign the decision were either on leave or on official business.

Notwithstanding the court decision, Marcos said he was "not completely down." He told radio station dyLA that he would file a motion for reconsideration.

His estranged wife Rotilla had mixed emotions when she learned of Marcos' dismissal.

Marcos and Rotilla were married on Dec. 31, 1971 at the first Baptist Church in this city. They have two children.

Rotilla claimed that Marcos started to change his attitude toward her when he was appointed presiding judge of RTC Branch 20 in 1993.

She filed a complaint against him in the Supreme Court in December 1996 after she discovered that Marcos was having an affair.

But it was only in August last year when the high court suspended Marcos indefinitely, shortly after Davide saw Marcos and his partner during the fun jog.

Marcos denied the allegation and accused his wife of having an affair with his cousin. He even filed an adultery case against his wife and sought the annulment of their marriage.

In its ruling, the Supreme Court said Marcos' allegation did not excuse him for his action.

"We cannot gloss over the incident that happened during the fun run as recounted by Chief Justice Davide," it said.

Marcos, it added, even "candidly admitted" to Davide that he has been living with the woman for the last three years because "he was already separated from his wife."

The accused should not have brought his partner to a public function because he is still legally married to Rotilla although they have long been separated, according to the court.

"This conduct is certainly unbecoming of a judge whose conduct must all times be beyond reproach," it said.

Smugglers cashing in on contraband rice

RICE smuggling has evolved into a profitable business in the country, with an annual estimated volume of up to 500,000 tons, officials said.

"We have what we call a guerrilla type of operation.

Smugglers use private wharfs," Deputy Customs Commissioner Ray Allas told a forum on rice smuggling.

Allas said the customs bureau had so far seized 34 shipments of contraband rice, including those coming from Thailand and Vietnam, since the start of the year. He did not give the total volume of the grain impounded by his bureau.

Under the law, only the state-trading firm National Food Authority can directly import the staple grain to fill the shortfall in local production.

"Sometimes when they asked us, 'What's the volume of smuggled rice?' If we know the answer, then we are the smugglers," NFA Deputy Administrator Gregorio Tan said at the forum.

"Under an extrapolated system, it would still be around 400,000 to 500,000 tons (annually)," he said.

The Philippines has been importing rice since 1983 to fill shortfalls in the local production. Official imports this year are expected to reach 774,000 tons, including 104,000 tons given by the US government under a soft-loan agreement.

Low prices

Officials said the lower rice prices in the world market this year compared to the high cost of locally produced rice has probably spurred smuggling in recent months.

"The international price of rice now is at its lowest.

Previously, the price was around... $250 to $300 per ton. Now it is down to $165. So the profitability has increased simply because international world market price has gone down," Tan said.

Locally produced rice costs between $300 and $340 per ton, according to NFA officials.

The higher price in the Philippines compared to other Asian countries is mostly due to higher production costs stemming from the lack of modern farm equipment, farm-to-market roads and irrigation facilities.

Officials said the lack of resources, including ships, in a country with one of the longest shorelines in the world, had made it more difficult for Philippine authorities to monitor the smuggling of commodities operations.

"We are suffering from lack of resources. We don't even have intelligence funds to start with," Allas said.

Tan said the NFA was studying a proposal to stop the issue of permits to private firms to help stop the flow of contraband rice into the country.

Officials said they were now checking reports some firms that were given licenses by the NFA to import rice this year bought more than their allowed quota.

For the first time this year, the NFA issued permits to local firms to bring into the country up to 20,000 tons of rice as part of a $175-million grain sector development loan with the Asian Development Bank. *Reuters*

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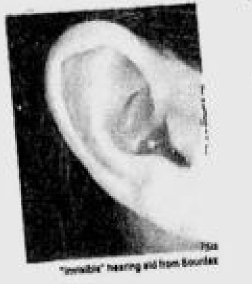

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A FRESH START

As we enter the second semester, it is everyone's hope that the economy will have a fresh start.

In a meeting with the President, businessmen expressed the urgent need for the Government to address the Mindanao problem, the kidnappings, and for the military to make a major breakthrough so that optimism will return. Thus, all of us -- Government, Business and the Labor Sector -- can concentrate on the economy.

PROACTIVE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

We are pleased with the decisive measures that the President has taken, namely:

1. She has created a Crisis Manager for Peace and Order to solve within 90 days the serious security problems of our country.
2. She has reshuffled both the police and military leadership to replace ineffective commanders.
3. She has committed to pump-prime the economy with labor-intensive and housing projects that have a multiplier effect.

PROACTIVE MEASURES: GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR WORKING TOGETHER

1. Manufacturers have committed to DTI not to increase prices of basic commodities in July.
2. Manufacturers are requested to make available prime commodities at factory prices to NFA rolling stores in the depressed areas nationwide.
3. The Pharmaceutical Industry is requested to support Government's campaign to reduce by 50% the prices of medicines within the next 12 months by promoting the use of generic drugs.
4. The business sector is requested to proactively work with the Government and the NGOs in reaching out to the marginalized sector by adopting a "barrio", patterned after the Peace Corps volunteer program.

OUTLOOK OF THE ECONOMY - 3rd & 4th QUARTERS

1. Compared to the second quarter, the economy will slightly pick up and perform better in the third quarter. This is because, as manufacturers in the Philippines and around the world bring their inventory to a minimum level, any slight rise in demand will translate into increased production and the hiring of workers previously laid off.
2. The economy will perform better in the fourth quarter than the third quarter as traditionally consumer spending increases during the holiday season. At the same time, the increased remittances of overseas workers will strengthen our foreign reserves.

We look forward to the return of optimism, confidence and dynamism in both Government and the private sector. In this light, the President's State of the Nation Address should set our future directions and firm up Government's resolve in coping with the challenges.

The impact of these measures will begin to be felt in the latter half of the year, just in time for the revival of consumer demand and the buoyancy that usually comes with the Christmas season.

CONSUMER & OIL PRICE WATCH
-Private Sector-

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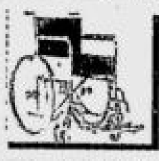

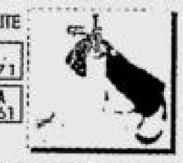

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EDITORIALS

Persecuted pose

IN THE LATEST episode of the real-life drama that has seen him being ousted from the presidency and now being haled to court, Joseph Estrada pleaded that he be given "a fair trial, according to the rule of law, free from intimidation, malice and undue pressure in the courts." Last Wednesday, the day after he was arraigned on a charge of plunder, Estrada complained that during the impeachment proceedings, he was "summarily convicted in a trial by publicity, motivated by political ambitions and abetted by a biased media." "This is injustice of the highest order," he protested.

It's a role the former movie actor has played to the hilt: that of the persecuted hero. And why not? Driven out of power in January by a people fed up with his incompetence in running the government and the corruption of his administration, Estrada claimed he was the victim of the economic elite, church leaders and the media who conspired to bring him down because he was championing the cause of the poor. That pose apparently played well among his supporters who launched an attack on Malacañang last May 1 and almost succeeded in restoring him to the presidency.

It's time somebody told Estrada, "*Kumita na 'yan.*" He can't forever be playing to the gallery. He is facing serious charges and he must answer them in court. And while history will ultimately render its verdict, right now it's for the justices of the Sandiganbayan to determine. whether he is innocent or guilty as charged.

Estrada and his lawyers have been repeating that old refrain about being denied due process and the chance to present his side. With his battery of well-known lawyers and with his allies in the Senate rushing to his defense, how could he say that about the impeachment trial? True, he never got to present witnesses and evidence in his favor, but for that he can only blame his lawyers and the 11 senators who thought they were doing him a favor by blocking the introduction of vital evidence. Their vote aborted the impeachment trial and ensured that his side would not be heard.

Now Estrada has the chance to present his side before a court of law. But again it's his lawyers who are delaying the process by throwing roadblocks every inch of the way. As of the last count, they had filed a total of 68 motions—all of which have to be acted upon before the trial can begin. So who is denying him the opportunity to defend himself before the court of public opinion?

In his latest public statement, Estrada said that he "fully recognizes the jurisdiction" of the Sandiganbayan over the cases. That's not how it looked when he refused to enter a plea during his arraignment. A better way for Estrada to demonstrate that he is submitting himself to the court's jurisdiction is to tell his lawyers to drop all their petty motions so that his trial can begin very soon.

In the meantime, he and his lawyers should stop all these public appeals for impartiality, fairness, respect for due process, etc. They serve no other purpose than to undermine public confidence in the impartiality of the justices, the integrity of the Sandiganbayan and the justness of any verdict that they may finally reach.

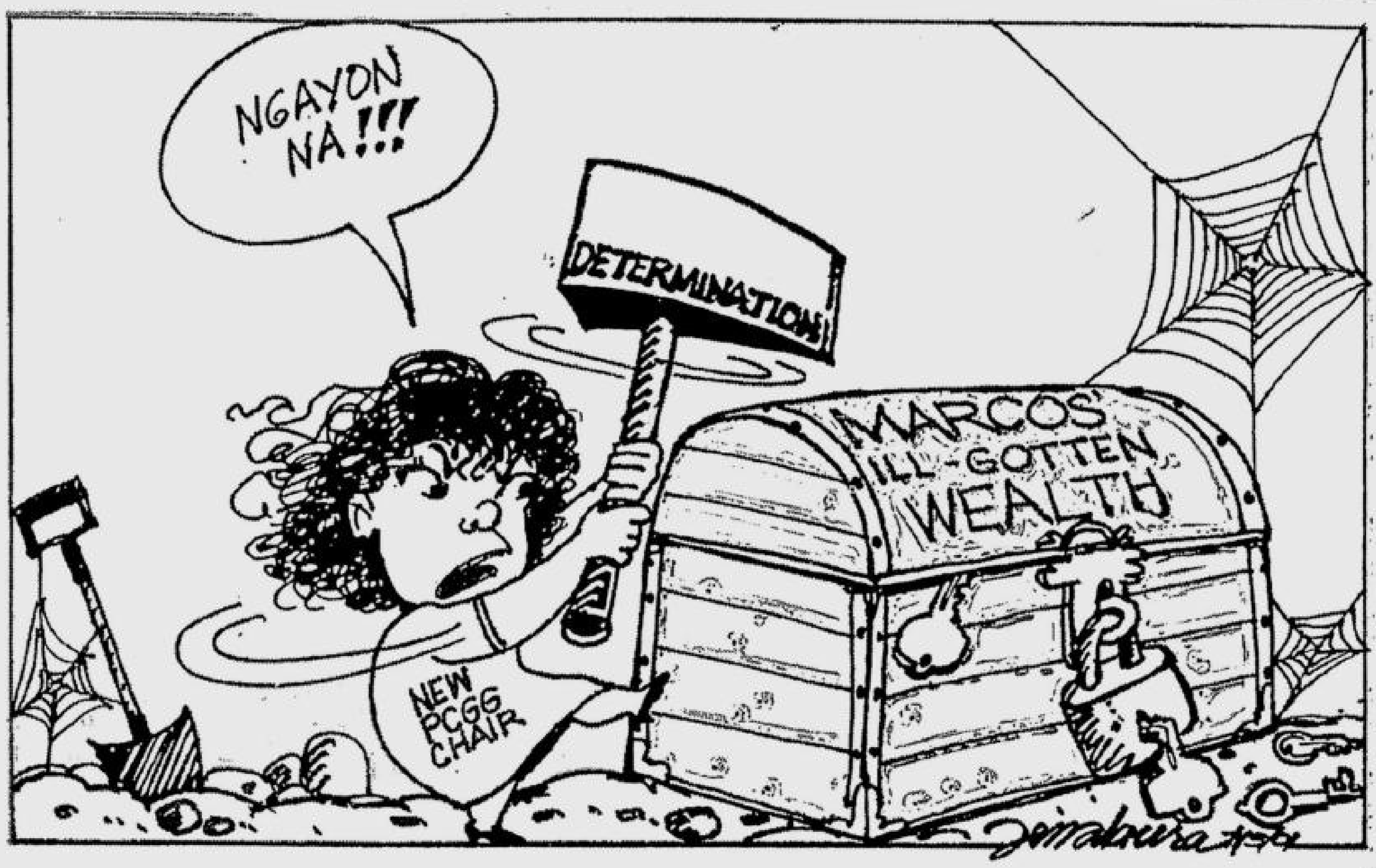
Pity

ONE thing Joseph Estrada cannot deny: he has not been denied the right to be represented by counsel. During the impeachment trial, Estrada was defended by a team of legal luminaries led by retired Chief Justice Andres Narvasa and former Justice Secretary Estelito Mendoza. Except for Mendoza, who pleaded ill health, he has the same legal team defending him in the cases that the Ombudsman filed before the Sandiganbayan. Plus former Sen. Rene Saguisag, and very recently former Justice Secretary Serafin Cuevas.

It's probably one of the best legal panels money can buy—or cannot buy. Saguisag has said he is serving pro bono, while Cuevas has announced that he would not be sending any bill to Estrada, but merely rely on the latter's "magnanimity" to give the appropriate compensation for his efforts.

Estrada should be touched by Cuevas' magnanimity. Early last year, Estrada dismissed Cuevas from his Cabinet after some serious disagreements over the grant of parole to priest killer Norberto Manero and how to deal with presidential cronies Lucio Tan and Mark Jimenez. But all that is forgiven, Cuevas said, especially after Estrada asked for his help. "I took pity on him," he said.

Now all those who cannot afford the services of lawyers know where to get topnotch legal representation. If, despite Estrada's already formidable defense team, Cuevas couldn't turn down his appeal for help, surely he will not turn away, say, an impoverished farmer accused of stealing a carabao.



A happy ending, finally, on Mehan Gardens row?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE FIGHT over the Mehan Gardens between Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and militant environmental groups may finally come to a happy conclusion. Atienza's beloved City College of Manila may be constructed in Intramuros as this column suggested last June 27. The vacant lot belongs to the Department of Tourism which supervises the Intramuros Administration which, in turn, has authority over all constructions inside Intramuros. The lot can be swapped with the Mehan Gardens which the DOT can then develop. Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon should immediately approve the deal as it would be good for all parties concerned.

This is the best compromise we can think of. Atienza will have his college, and the environmentalists will be able to save the Mehan Gardens. As for the DOT and the IA, they will have one more building in the wasteland that is Intramuros. In the many years that the IA has been trying to rebuild Intramuros, it has been able to entice few lot owners to build on their pieces of property. This is a golden opportunity to have one more building erected there—with Castilian architecture as the law requires, of course.

The former Walled City can be said to be the new education center of Manila. With four universities already there—Letran, Lyceum, Mapua and the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila—it is the logical choice for the CCM. The lot on which it is proposed to be built is the former campus of the Ateneo de Manila. The location may prod the new CCM students to study harder. (I had suggested the former University of Sto. Tomas campus on Aduana and, since it is now owned by the Far East Bank, to swap it with the present CCM school, the former Philippine National Bank Building on the Escolta which was designed and built precisely for a bank. But the former Ateneo campus is even better because the swap will be between government agencies and there shouldn't be too much haggling.)

Developing the Mehan Gardens for tourism should be a breeze for the DOT. That is its specialty, isn't it? The Department of Environment and Natural Resources can help as it is Secretary Heherson Alvarez, after all, who has been mediating in the quarrel. The environmental groups, on the other hand, have volunteered to develop it at no cost to the government. So there, with so many people ready, willing and able to develop the Mehan Gardens, the new park can be inaugurated by Christmas.

It wouldn't be hard to do that, too. All you have to do is tear up the concrete pavements, plant grass and trees and put park benches. I suggest making it again a *jardin botanico* with Philippine trees and plants that are getting rare. In place of the old zoo (we already have the Manila Zoo near Harrison Park), I suggest a petting zoo and a pond with fish, ducks and geese. Children in Metro Manila rarely see farm animals anymore except in photographs and movies and television. The Mehan Gardens would be their chance to see—and touch—small farm animals like goats, sheep, colts, calves, pigs and chicken.

* * *

While the fight for the speakership of the House is over except for the formality (Rainbow man Joe de Venecia is it), the fight for the Senate presidency is far from over in spite of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's announced preference for Sen. Franklin Drilon. Nobody yet has the numbers there. The People Power Coalition and the opposition senators are evenly balanced. It is the independent senators who can make any candidate the Senate president.

The problem with the PPC is that it has three candidates: Drilon, Renato Cayetano and Joker Arroyo. The opposition has only one: Edgardo Angara. The independents have incumbent Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

If the independents are smart, their leader can end up as Senate president pro tempore. By teaming up either the administration or opposition group, they can make one or the other candidate the winner. For which reason they can bargain for the No. 2 post in the Senate.

The administration and opposition candidates cannot be too *pakipot*. If a three-way deadlock occurs, Pimentel may end up as the holdover Senate president.

* * *

I can't help but note the similarity between Ador and Rosebud or Mata Hari. Both claim to be former agents of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force now ratting on their former boss, Panfilo Lacson. Rosebud first appeared on television with her face darkened so she can't be identified. Later she came out in the open and continued spilling the beans in media. Ador first came out on TV with his face covered, also ratting on Lacson. Later he also came out in the open, using his real name and continued with his tales.

It is interesting that when Rosebud and her tales became stale and the media lost interest, Ador surfaced with similar stories to tell against Lacson. Whoever are their handlers are in a rut. But they seem to believe in the saying "if at first you don't succeed, try and try again."

One thing that many observers notice in Ador is that he seems to know too much. Like the Alfred Hitchcock character, he is "the man who knows too much." And that is the reason he loses credibility the more he talks. Even NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco has advised not to pay too much attention to him.

A person in Ador's place (or Rosebud's), who are mere "agents" (a better name for "informer") of the PAOCTF, are paid to inform their handlers, not to be told sensitive information that can endanger their co-workers. Even regular agents of intelligence agencies are given information only on a "need to know" basis. Information even for senior officers of intelligence units are compartmentalized. Nobody knows anything outside his department. This is to prevent leaks. And if there is, it is easy to know from whom the leak came from from the type of information that leaked out.

So it is hard to believe that Ador really knows all that he has been spilling daily in media. There is such a thing as going overboard. Ador and his handlers may be overdoing it.

* * *

KAPIHAN NOTES; Guest on Monday's Kapihan sa Manila (Hotel) are the leading candidates in the races for the Senate presidency and the House speakership: Senators Franklin Drilon, Renato Cayetano and Edgardo Angara and Representatives Jose de Venecia and Florencio Abad.

The Japan that can't remember

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

THE MODERN Japan we know is an oasis of civilization. Its citizens are the most law-abiding and courteous you will meet anywhere. Its government is the most generous provider of international assistance. Its industries churn out technological wonders by the hundreds each year while "Made In Japan" are bywords for quality and reliability. Its culture and cuisine are among the most refined in the world.

Our admiration for Japan compounds our perplexity at the continued refusal of its successive governments since World War II to acknowledge and then apologize for Japan's appalling criminal record during that period of military supremacy and expansion. This steadfast obduracy through six decades and into the seventh has infuriated its neighbors, its allies, its friends and even the beneficiaries of its post-war largesse.

The latest incident includes the utter refusal of Japan's Ministry of Education to correct the history textbooks it issues which either ignores or glosses over Japan's rapacity in Asia during the war. China and South Korea in particular have been outraged over this self-sustained amnesia.

And for good reason. Korea's humiliation and suffering under Japanese colonialization is well documented. We would have to go back almost 2,500 years for a historical analogy to the relationship between Japan and Korea during this period: Sparta and its Helots, although the Helots probably had it better. Japan's record in China between 1931 and 1945 is one of unspeakable brutality. We are familiar with that behavior. So hated were the Japanese in the Philippines during and immediately following the war that individual Japanese put their lives at risk by visiting certain areas of the country. But time has healed deep wounds, and Japan's post-war conduct has been close to impeccable.

Nonetheless, there are jarring juxtapositions. Just these past few weeks, the Japanese have been deeply angered at a rape in Okinawa by an American serviceman. Properly so. Yet when contrasted with the decision of its Ministry of Education, it again highlights Japan's inability to place the sufferings of other nations or citizens on a par with its own. It is an attitude that many suspect comes perilously close to racism.

Just look at the facts on the famous "Rape of Nanking." The walled city of Nanking, then the provisional capital of China, fell to the invading Japanese on Dec. 13, 1937 after a defense of only five days. Once it fell, the Japanese began mass executions, murder, rape, pillage and plunder in the city and its adjacent six rural villages that lasted for three months. On the first day alone, General Nakajima's 16th Division killed some 32,300 Chinese prisoners of war in Nanking. On the night of Dec. 16, more than 17,000 unarmed men and boys were executed on orders of Gen. Inuma Mamoru so that no harm might befall Prince Asaka when he paraded through the city on horseback the next day.

The total number of Chinese atrocity victims in Nanking remains hotly disputed. The best Japanese estimates put the figure at above 200,000. The war crimes trial in Nanking accepted a figure of "over 300,000." Nanking's population was 400,000. The Japanese slaughtered between half and three-fourths of the population of China's capital. This pattern of brutality was repeated throughout Asia and through the period of war.

The exact rape numbers are also disputed but are indisputably large. Some 1,000 women and girls of all ages were raped daily. The raping continued from December until late March. The records of members of the Imperial Army, the Army Ministry and the Foreign Ministry confirm that there was widespread knowledge of these atrocities.

The Japanese military record in the Philippines was no less horrible. The *kempeitai* or military police were as ruthless as their Gestapo counterparts in Nazi Germany. Fort Santiago became a bed of torture from which heroes never emerged alive. Filipinos were regularly brutalized.

But the worst episodes were to come as the Americans began the liberation of the Philippines. Entire families and the inhabitants of whole city blocks were slaughtered in Manila. The De La Salle compound, where refugees gathered, was the scene of one of countless such ongoing massacres in the city: babies thrown up and bayonetted; women's abdomen's ripped open with samurai swords so they could die slow, painful deaths; the Christian brothers killed with casual indifference. To this day, many of those who survived the horror of the War Years are psychologically unable to recount their experience.

Herbert Bix, in "Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan," details scholarly facts which leaves the reader with the inescapable conclusion that these atrocities happened, that they happened with the knowledge and acquiescence, if not the encouragement of the highest organs of the Japanese state, not excluding the Emperor himself, and that there has been a largely successful and continuing official Japanese conspiracy to expunge, distort or deny that terrible record.

It is as incomprehensible to me why modern Japan continues to obfuscate its past as how a nation as cultured as Germany could have descended into the Nazi pit. But Germany has been, by and large, open with its history and it is this very openness that has helped create a democratic powerhouse that is the economic center of Europe. Japan's failure to do the same confuses and angers not its enemies but its friends.

How can a nation be so indignant, rightfully so, over one rape yet so deaf, dumb and blind over hundreds of thousands of others? How can they mourn Hiroshima and Nagasaki but be blind over the deaths of many more? How can they stonefacedly, never mind shamelessly, ignore the whole question of comfort women? They are not shaming their ancestors by telling the truth. Rather, it was those who committed these crimes in World War II who shamed their own ancestors as well as their descendants. It is time for this great and proud race, our friends, to finally put the past behind them and move on.

Threat of a dark horse in the Senate

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE PHILIPPINE Senate is living up to its reputation as a centrifugal institution—meaning it operates on the principle of fission, rather than fusion. Nothing illustrates the dynamic of this powerful chamber more vividly than the uncertain contest for the Senate presidency.

With only 10 days ahead to the opening session of Congress, nothing is clear about the outcome of the contest, except that the silhouette of a dark horse is looming in the landscape—the de facto opposition leader, Sen. Edgardo Angara.

The threat of a dark horse should put pressure on the administration's fractious allies in the Senate to close ranks behind a single candidate. So, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo may yet find an opposition *coup de grâce* in the Senate leadership not through lack of numbers but by default.

Senators Franklin Drilon and Rene Cayetano have emerged as the main contenders for the administration coalition, but Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. can't be counted out as a compromise. The state of parties in the Senate is as follows:

The Lapiang Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) is the largest single bloc composed of Angara, Blas Ople, Vicente Sotto III, Rodolfo Biazon, Tessie Aquino-Oreta and Gregorio Honasan. Senators Luisa Ejercito-Estrada and Panfilo Lacson should be counted part of this bloc, giving it a total of eight. This is the largest single bloc in the Senate.

On the other side, Lakas has four holdover senators—Cayetano, Robert Barbers, Juan Flavier and Loren Legarda-Leviste. This bloc is Cayetano's hard core. Identified with the PDP-Laban are Senators Joker Arroyo, Sergio Osmeña III and Pimentel, although Serge acts more like an independent than a die-hard party member. Drilon is part of the People Power Coalition which won 8-5-1 in the May elections, together with Francis Pangilinan, Ralph Recto and Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

Drilon's formal party affiliation is the LDP, but he and Angara split during the Estrada administration's crisis. Sen. John Osmeña was identified with Estrada during the impeachment trial, but after the May elections, he leaned toward President Macapagal and pushed the approval of the Omnibus Power Bill in the last Congress.

Arroyo, also of the PPC, has independent tendencies and is being pushed as another dark horse by the Senate newcomers, including Manuel Villar. Senators Robert Jaworski and Ramon Revilla are counted as administration allies. Sen. Noli de Castro claims to be independent which means, in effect, that he is neither here nor there—i.e., a flotsam.

No one can build alliances in the Senate mainly on the basis of the PPC or the Puwersa ng Masa. These two competing coalitions have dissolved. Thus, senators have to fall back on their basic party affiliations as the core for coalition building. From the above configurations, it is clear that Angara, with his LDP, has the largest structural core for coalition-building. On the other hand, administration allies are fragmented, if not loosely linked.

This is the reason why the President has stepped into the fray inside the administration to pull the squabbling factions together. She is said to be backing Drilon, but the more important thing is that these factions close ranks behind someone. Anyone who cries "foul" over presidential intervention is either politically naïve or out of touch with the realpolitik of the Senate. Senators are jealous of their independence and have protested too much, but the reality is that presidential intervention is a fact of life in the election of the speaker and the Senate president.

No Senate president has ever been elected without the blessing or intervention of the President of the Republic, and President Macapagal is no different from her predecessors. The reason is simple, yet compelling. No President, if he or she can help it, would allow the opposition to seize control of Congress and of the legislative agenda. In the May elections, the government won more seats than the opposition, so the logic is that it should have the edge to control the Senate.

Power-sharing between Drilon and Cayetano to close the fractures opened by the contending factions is a foolish formula. The administration has only two years to go before the next presidential election. Under power-sharing, the Senate would have two presidents in two years. This violates continuity. This arrangement ignores an important Senate dynamic—that chamber is prone to upheavals of leadership, especially where no party has a clear majority, giving rise to volatile coalition-making that can wreck a prearranged framework.

Former President Estrada calmed the conflict in the Senate with the power-sharing formula between Ople and Drilon. If it worked, after the death of Senate President Marcelo Fernan, it was because Estrada had no legislative agenda, so it really did not matter whether it was Drilon or Ople at the helm.

The Macapagal administration is driven by an agenda, policies and programs. Logic dictates that its legislative agenda is better served if the leadership in the House and in Senate is in the hands of her allies. No doubt, Angara is also agenda- and program-oriented, but the opposition's agenda is not the administration's agenda.

The administration has the potential numbers to win control of the Senate, provided that it can cobble its factions behind a single candidate for the Senate presidency. Vice President Teofisto Guingona is wasting his time promoting power-sharing, which is an enemy of continuity and stability in the chamber. The problem in the Senate is that senators have an invincible belief that they are all presidential material and each has a national base, so it's hard to form coalitions in that chamber. Coalition is made more difficult by the multi-party composition of the Senate.

The pressure to close ranks is stronger on the administration's allies than on the opposition because if they allow Angara to squeak through their disunity, they will scuttle the administration's opportunity to dictate the legislative agenda.

Haydee has work cut out for her

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IF anyone can straighten out the mess that is the PCGG, that should be Haydee Yorac, who has just accepted the post of chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, "after a long courtship," as a front-page story yesterday put it.

Many folks may be wondering what all the fuss is about, since the PCGG has been effectively marginalized. Hailed soon after the first Edsa as the country's greatest hope of recovering the wealth the Marcoses and their cronies stole, today it's a symbol of the abject failure of the post-Edsa governments to bring the Marcoses to justice.

Of course, the Marcoses and their friends put up every obstacle imaginable, from the legal to the political, to trip up the recovery efforts. But a large part of the PCGG's failure must be laid at the doorstep of the various officials who took charge of the commission.

In the early days of the Aquino administration, there was already loose talk, as well as news reports, of how various PCGG "agents" as well as officials were acting like minor potentates in the companies where they were assigned supposedly to protect the interests of the public. "Sequestered" firms became virtual milking cows for these appointees, who voted themselves generous salaries and privileges. It was these same appointees who vigorously resisted privatization for fear of losing their sinecures.

As an example, consider the sequestered private media outfits, such as Channels 9 and 13, and the Times Journal group which were supposed to be sold to private investors, but are still under sequestration today. What administration, after all, could resist the temptation of a virtual media empire that could be used to promote its political agenda?

* * *

BUT it's in the work of recovering the Marcoses' hidden wealth that is the PCGG's greatest failure.

Case after case, including a spectacular trial in New York based on an anti-racketeering law, was filed against the Marcoses, only to go down in flames. I don't remember now if this was said about the PCGG, but the quip applies as well. It's record is certainly "unblemished by victory."

I can understand, though, why Yorac took on the challenge despite everyone's skepticism. The challenge remains, after all. As the attempted withdrawal of funds by Irene Marcos Araneta in Germany shows, the family has not really given up on attempts to access the money they had to secrete away when the government fell. And obviously, there's still a lot of wealth hidden somewhere.

I take it as a very good sign that Yorac and her two new commissioners: former Defense Undersecretary Ruben Carranza Jr. (also a mean writer, by the way) and Victoria Avena, both professors at the UP College of Law, have given themselves a two-year limit to fulfill the PCGG's original mandate.

The way I see it, either the government goes full throttle in its efforts to recover the wealth stolen from the people by the Marcoses and Company, or admit that the money is simply beyond the reach of legal processes. The wiser course should be to cut our losses and walk away.

* * *

YOU might remember the movie "Proof of Life." Much of the publicity centered on the affair that was sparked between "America's sweetheart" Meg Ryan and Russel Crowe, the movie's top stars. But it has an even greater significance for Filipinos as it focused on a problem about which we already know too much of: kidnapping.

The title, in fact, refers to any sort of proof demanded of kidnappers to show the hostage is still alive. It can be a photograph or video tape of the hostage holding up a newspaper, to show the "proof of life" was taken recently; or in more gruesome cases, an identifiable body part of the hostage.

In the film, Crowe plays a negotiator and "recovery expert" who drops in and out of hotspots to rescue kidnap victims. He is employed by a multinational insurance firm, from whom companies which must send executives abroad have taken "kidnap insurance."

Well, the Philippines has joined the elite league of kidnap capitals, what with insurance for "kidnapping, extortion and ransom" now being offered. So, has kidnapping become so common it's as much a risk of daily life as car accidents, household mishaps and illness?

* * *

MIDDLE-CLASS Pinoys used to look on with bemusement at the string of kidnappings that had befallen the country in the early '90s. First, it was a "Chinese" problem, since majority of the victims hailed from the Tsinoy community. Then it became a problem of the rich and super-rich, since only those whose families could afford to pay ransom are presumably in danger.

Lately, though we've been hearing stories of "opportunity kidnappings," abductions carried out only because kidnappers spotted a potential victim, saw an opening, and struck. Ransom demands have been subject to bargaining. Some gangs have resorted to grabbing children in malls in exchange for an ATM withdrawal.

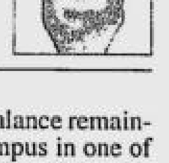
In such a scenario, everybody is at risk, even families of common working folk who might just be all spiffed up for a weekend stroll around an air-conditioned mall.

As we can see from the Abu Sayyaf situation, in abductions, the poor hostages are even more vulnerable. While wealthy hostages are kept alive in expectation of rich rewards, the poor whose families could not ransom them are often the first to be killed or executed. The better to serve as "incentives" for the families of the wealthy to pay up.

Rich folks have already been paying one form of anti-kidnapping insurance or another. What are drivers/bodyguards, bulletproof vehicles, alarms and, in the most extreme cases, migration to a "safer" country but a mode of "insurance" against abduction? I wouldn't put it past the kidnap gangs to now start monitoring insurance placements. After all, if you feel impelled to take out kidnap insurance, you must be worth kidnapping.

Mehan Gardens controversy

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN my name appears in Bambi Harper's column, I am often tempted to reciprocate using a *sosyal* adjective to describe her as either an *amiga*, *enemiga*, or, at best, *intriga*. In a recent column on the Mehan Gardens controversy, she stated that I was the first president of the City College of Manila (I was the fourth), and that I resigned (true), because the College was plagued with lack of funds (not quite, the college was sufficiently funded, but like any government agency this was "subject to availability"). As an appointee of then Mayor Alfredo Lim, I resigned when he ran, unsuccessfully, for president in 1998. I resigned to give incoming Mayor Lito Atienza the freedom to appoint a new president of his choice and confidence. Mayor Atienza refused to accept my written resignation and asked me, face to face, to stay on but then I had already accepted a less stressful, non-administrative job, teaching Philippine History at the Ateneo de Manila University where I still am at present.

The idea to move the City College of Manila (CCM) from the old Philippine National Bank on Escolta is not new. Aside from the high costs of maintaining the PNB building and paying the amortization, the building was not designed to be a college. Offices were hastily converted into classrooms and this meant tearing down partitions, and even walls, to create space and ventilation for offices originally designed for less people and full air-conditioning. The ancient elevators were cranky and could not be operated all at the same time. Even if they did, these were not meant to transport 8,000 students up and down the building daily, six days a week. These basic adverse conditions, I used to think, built character, but then the students deserved a more conducive place for learning, a building specifically designed for educational purposes, a place with more space, air and light—and I do not mean the Mehan Gardens!

In 1997 I suggested selling the PNB building, paying off the debt and with the balance remaining from the sale, build a new campus in one of the many idle lots owned by the City of Manila. Discussing this with people involved with city schools brought out the more economical option of remodeling an existing school to meet college needs. Two public schools were suggested as potential sites for the relocated college but my plans went no further than discussion. Recently, part of the Mehan Gardens was fenced off—trees were cut without the necessary permits from the National Museum, the National Historical Institute and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources—and the proposed CCM campus has hogged precious column inches for weeks. Most news grow stale after a week.

The confusion is quite basic. The Mehan Gardens is but part of the original Jardin Botanico established in 1858 by Governor General Fernando de Norzagaray. The Mehan Gardens and Jardin Botanico are used interchangeably but are not exactly the same thing. Old postcards show shady tree-lined walks, benches in lush surroundings, a bird cage proving that the Americans enhanced the former Jardin Botanico later renamed Mehan Gardens in 1913 to honor John C. Mehan, superintendent of parks and sanitation, who was found dead in what is now the North Cemetery in Manila. In recent years the sorry, untended garden was used as a parking lot but was still open space, open to violation by the construction of buildings. So the Jardin Botanico is Mehan Gardens and also Sining Kayumanggi (Brown Art) because part of the garden was the venue for art exhibits and performances.

To clear the confusion, the NHI, using a 1898 Manila street plan, illustrates conclusively that the contested Mehan Gardens is but part of the larger, older Jardin Botanico that stretches from the Liwasang Bonifacio, Metropolitan Theater, the present Mehan Gardens and the Bonifacio gobbledygook artwork by Castrillo close to the Manila City Hall. The Jardin Botanico is not just the controversial plot in-between P. Burgos, Basa, Arroceros and hospital streets, it extends from Concepcion Street by City Hall to the steps of the Post Office building. This whole area is a historical and, more importantly, archaeological preserve as centuries-old artifacts have been turning up over the past century each time earth is moved. This is why written permits are required from the NHI and National Museum for any digging or construction in the area marked as a historical and archaeological preserve. Furthermore, the Mehan Gardens is one of the few remaining public open spaces in a strangled city.

Contrary to what some misinformed CCM students think, this is not another poor versus rich issue. Nobody objects to the construction of a new CCM campus, nobody wants to deprive them of their free college education in a better place; the issue here is location. There are alternative sites proposed and we hope the good mayor will not insist on the Mehan Gardens. Just yesterday, I passed by the site and wondered why the arguments are all on the CCM when a Park and Ride facility is being built in the same area? It is easy to get public sympathy for a college but a Park and Ride building? Evidently, there is more to this than meets the eye.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Simple pleasures

HIGH BLOOD

Heidi Fesalboni-Cervantes

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. **—Ed.**

NOTHING forces so harsh a self-appraisal as one's 60th birthday. For some of us there are really only two individuals—the you of 30 years ago, with your ignorance and innocence and dreams of glory largely influenced by the likes of Mandino and Helen Gurley Brown; and the you of now, laid back your 22-inch waist giving way to the battle of the bulge, desire succumbing grimly to resignation.

This seems to be happening more and more—I'd find myself sitting alone, reading, solving crossword puzzles, listening to my favorite Broadway hits, sipping my milk with calcium-laced coffee—it's the most piercing sign of getting older; this self-introspection.

And so, I had been asking myself just what joys make life so precious. There is certainly the sense of fulfilling one's potential. Another lies in those moments when a family, despite its rivalries and angers, does jell and senses its intense bonds.

No more dreaming of what might have been which Shakespeare says are the saddest of all the words of tongue and pen. Rather being comforted by the thought that one must never regret what might have been. For after all, the past that did not happen is as hidden from us as the future we cannot see.

Tasting and savoring the gift of simple pleasures are, therefore, what life at 60 is all about.

Item 1—Taking great pride in your four gifted children, letting them go to explore their own worlds, allowing them to make their own mistakes, hoping that they can manage and God-willing, learn first-hand lessons from life. That it is never what it seems, but is nonetheless what you make it, what you salvage from its shocks and offerings.

Item 2—Marveling at your three grandchildren's antics, their never-ending questions about what make things tick. Samples—"Lola, what's the fastest animal on earth? Why can it run so fast?" (Read—"I bet you were not able to catch that feature on Discovery Channel.")

"Lola, do you have money?" (Read—"Can we check out the latest special offers at Jollibee or McDo?")

Item 3—Luxuriating in the fact that now you have all the time in your hands to do whatever you please with no more thought of the eight-hour labor law. Focusing on such minutiae as the right amount of fertilizer to ensure a flower-filled vanda or a flourishing bonsai. Staying up late at night to hear Martin Nievera's inimitable rendition of "Pag-Uwi," the Metropop's first-prize winner, or catching the spirit lifters like "Touched by an Angel."

Why, you can even try any TV quiz show like "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" and fulfill your lifetime dream of joining a contest of brains, not only beauty and winning millions along the process. The possibilities seem certainly limitless!

Item 4—Looking forward to orchestrating your mother's 80th birthday celebration, a brainchild of your seven siblings from the far reaches of Germany, Canada and the United States. (Tickler—Do not forget to hire the best musical band in town and the services of five DJs!)

Meanwhile, ensuring that the would-be celebrator lives until Nov. 11 at least, with the aid of her numerous specialists and her two *yayas* and praying that the angel of death has still other climes to visit.

Feeling humbled that you have a ringside view of the inexorable march of old age and realizing what happens when the healthy tissues of one's body slowly succumb to diabetes and cholesterol excess. This intimations of mortality somehow act as a deterrent to whatever dreams you have of lasagna, *lechon kawali*, crème puffs and durian ice cream.

Item 5—Realizing that people are like ropes. That if there's no harmony between people, they rub each other until they begin to fray and they'll soon be asunder, be it friend to friend, or man to wife.

Thanking God that He has given you the love of your life, hopeless romantic that you are. That somehow you may do a Julia Roberts yet and turn out to be someone's ultimate she. Surely, hope still springs eternal in an aging breast.

Item 6—Strengthening your relationship with God. Reflecting that in this life you sometimes have to choose between pleasing God and pleasing man. Resolving that in the long run, it's better to please God. He's more apt to remember.

Item 7—Bearing in mind that there are things one can never forgive oneself. The betrayal of trusting friends. Returning love with hatred. Crime against the innocent and helpless. Stupidity. The rejection of permitted pleasure. Gloom where there is sunshine. Arrogance without reason. Hypocrisy. Cruelty. Lies. Desertions. Malevolence. Deceit...

Item 8—Zeroing in to these words—the summation of one's lifetime readings attributed to an Italian monk, Fra Giovanni:

"No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present instant. Take peace.

"The gloom of the world is but a shadow; behind it, yet within our reach, is Joy. Take joy."

I'll take peace and joy anytime!

Heidi Fesalboni-Cervantes, 60, retired from an administrative job in government.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO . . . ?

Mall bombing suspects

A JANITOR was killed while 17 others were injured when a bomb exploded in a comfort room in one of SM Megamall's cinemas in Mandaluyong on May 21, 2000, a week after a bomb also exploded in Glorietta 3 in Makati where 13 people were hurt. (PDI, 5/22/00)

The Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force pointed the bombings to alleged Moro Islamic Liberation Front members out to sow terror in the metropolis to divert the government's attention from the war against the separatist group in Mindanao.

Before dawn on May 27, 2000, 26 suspects were arrested when the PAOCTF raided a Muslim community in Maharlika Village in Lower Bicutan, Taguig. They were detained at the PAOCTF.

The PAOCTF filed two cases for murder with multiple frustrated murder against all 26 suspects with the Mandaluyong RTC Branch 214 for the SM Megamall bombing and with the Makati RTC Branch 137 for the Glorietta bombing.

The PAOCTF also filed four cases for violation of PD 1866, for allegedly keeping high-powered guns and explosives inside their houses, before Pasig RTC Branches 168 and 71.

Mandaluyong RTC Branch 214 Judge Edwin Sorongon first ordered the prosecution to conduct a preliminary investigation on June 2, 2000 and "complete the investigation within 15 days." By July 24, 2000, all the concerned judges ordered the conduct of preliminary investigation on the cases.

On Aug. 24, the defense assailed the Department of Justice's delay in issuing a resolution on the preliminary investigation ordered by the courts. Four days later, the justice department said that the preliminary investigation on all the cases shall be consolidated and held jointly. On Aug. 29, Sorongon compelled state prosecutor Albert Fonacier to submit the results of the preliminary investigation. But the DOJ has only set the preliminary investigation in September.

On Sept. 12, the prosecution informed the courts that it shall hold the results of its investigation until "it shall have assiduously evaluated the evidence submitted by the same parties..." The preliminary investigation started a week after. On Oct. 20, the prosecution said it will release the result of the investigation "in due time."

Last Jan. 8, Sorongon ordered the prosecution to release the results of the preliminary investigation since it has not yet issued its resolution on the case.

On Feb. 20, the DOJ issued a list of detainees committed in furtherance of their political beliefs or objectives. The list included 24 of the 26 accused. Due to this, the defense filed a motion for release on Feb. 26. On March 15, the 24 accused listed in the DOJ issuance were ordered released "on recognizance under the custody of their lawyers..." Those who remained in detention were Nestor Solaiman and Ali Samad.

The court has set the arraignment of the suspects on March 8. But on the said date, the prosecution issued its resolution reiterating the accusation on the 26 suspects. The defense requested for a reinvestigation of the DOJ resolution on March 23.

Case status: The DOJ hasn't released a result on the reinvestigation requested by the accused. They have not yet been arraigned. Solaiman and Samad are still in jail. *Armin P. Adina, PDI Research Department*

LETTERS

Lack of faith in God's providence

I AM against the reported plan to impose tithing in the Catholic Church for the simple reason that tithing indicates a lack of faith in a loving and provident God.

Bishops, priests and other religious leaders should perform their God-given mission without any regard for compensation and let God take care of their material needs. And God will, as He has done without interruption and exception since the founding of the Church 2,000 years ago.

The imposition of fees for the administration of the sacraments, such as baptism and matrimony, is another manifestation of a lack of deep faith on the part of those who ask us to have complete faith and trust in God.The Church should do away with all these fees and rely completely on God to prompt the faithful to support His Church with its material requirements.

And God will.

Let me just cite my experience. When I got married, the officating priest surprised me and my bride when he said, in answer to my question, that he did not charge anything for his services. Because of his utter selflessness and complete devotion to his religious duties, I felt more obligated to show my appreciation than if he had told me how much I should give. So I asked him if he would accept a donation. Yes, he replied. I happily wrote out a check which was much, much more than the prevailing fee then for wedding services. I believe this is what will happen when the faithful see the wholehearted dedication and devotion of the clergy to their sacred vocation. There will be no need for tithes and fees. The believers will dig deep into their pockets and give until it hurts. With deep faith and sincere prayers (accompanied by a vigorous fund-raising campaign on the parish level), the Church will end up with more financial and material support than it is now getting.

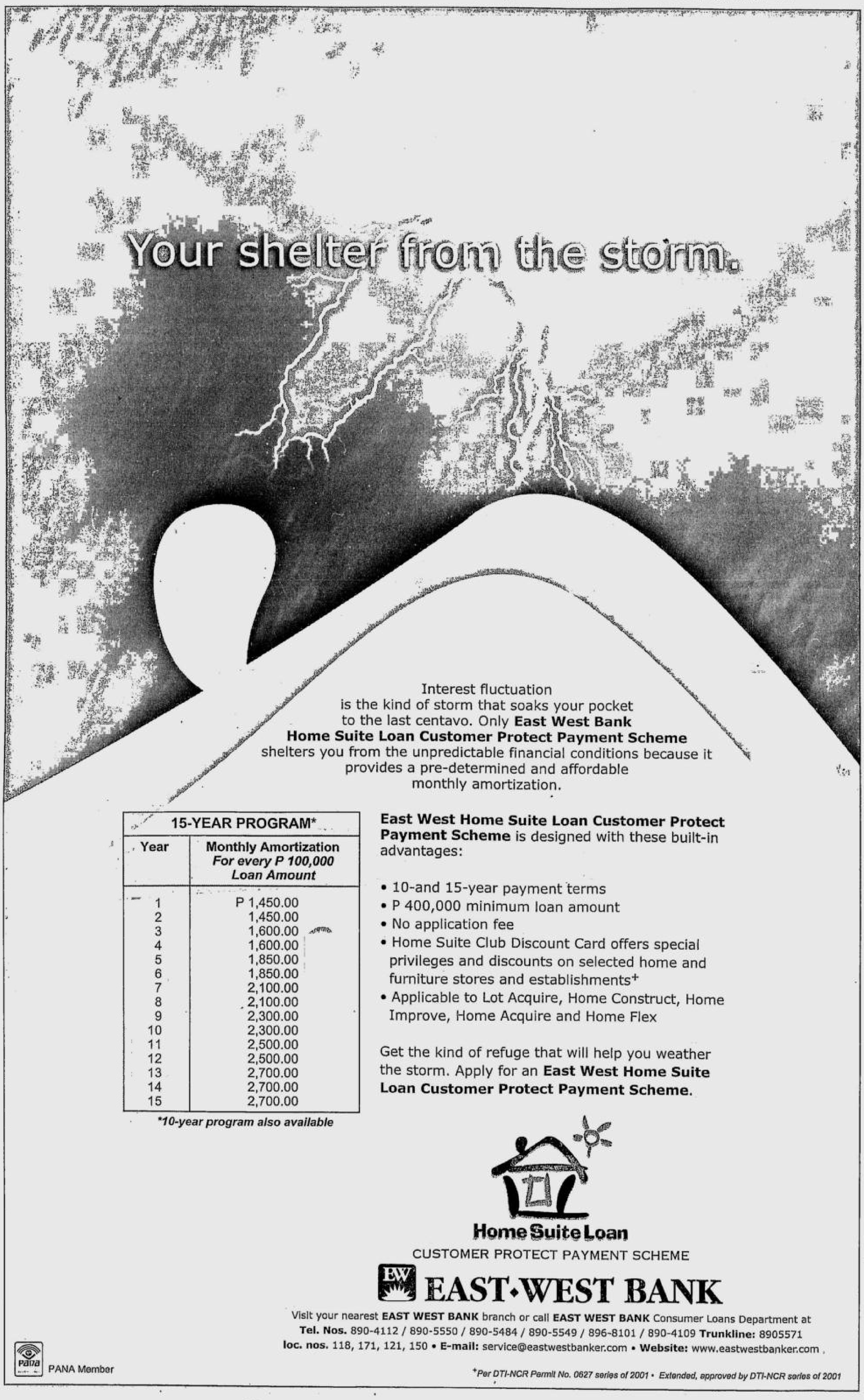
This was the challenge hurled by Jesus Christ when he sent out his first followers to preach and spread the gospel throughout the world. This is the same leap of faith He wants us to take today.—**GERRY GALIAN, 53 Dr. B. Castañeda, Mandaluyong City**

Nation of motherless children?

"I BELIEVE we should resist divorce because it will weaken the Filipino family. It will enervate the home, it will erode society." President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said.

"I believe we should protect the mandate of the Constitution on the sanctity of the family," she said, adding that the family is the central unit of society and "the basic source of our national bond and fraternity."

The greatest source of family breakups in this country is the departure of mothers to other countries to earn bread and butter for her children. Ours is a nation of motherless children shopping in the malls with dollars earned by mothers who will, in all likelihood, not experience the joys of bringing up their own children. Until economic and political stability are guaranteed by strong leadership and the end of corruption, until there is no need for mothers to abandon their children to the care of others, we cannot pretend that "the sanctity of the family" is a primary interest of our nation.—**CANDY GOURLAY, N20 Tavistock Terrace, London N19 4db**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THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

To ban or not to ban

I UNDERSTAND Erap himself wants his trial for plunder covered by television. As do his lawyers. That is at least something I share with them, if for entirely different reasons.

Erap and his lawyers probably figure that the media exposure would bring them public sympathy, the way the airing of Erap's arrest did to them a couple of months ago. I would not discount the possibility—up to a point. Erap has an instinctive grasp of the images that move the public, and is perfectly capable of playing the role of underdog to the hilt. The underdog who is beset by formidable adversity midway in the movie but triumphs in the end: that is the plotline of his movies. And, well, he has shown himself a far better actor in real life than in the movies. He almost managed to convince us for a while that he was president of the country.

But if they think it will fuel mass restiveness the way Erap's arrest did, they have another think coming. "Edsa III," as I've said before, came from wrong timing. Had it happened before the elections, and had government been more careful about the images it beamed, it would not have happened at all. Now is the best time to try Erap, when government is more stable and when candidates do not have to pander to the crowd to get elected. Now is the time to make the sordid details of Erap's plunder known by making the trial public. The fear that televising the trial would light up another powder keg is completely unfounded. Its more likely effect would be to turn the public against Erap, the way the impeachment trial did.

There is, quite incidentally, one public that would welcome that trial with open arms, and would like to see a blow-by-blow account of it. That is the global Filipino community, the same global Filipino community that helped in no small way to make Edsa II possible. The Filipinos in America, for one, are anxious to see it happen. Young and old, rich or poor, professional or TNT, they are one in that wish. Well, there are exceptions. I met a senior citizen in Fisherman's Wharf who hails from Sta. Mesa and who could not for the life of him understand what "they are doing to Erap back there, when they have only the word of well-known criminals against him." You have those types, but they are the rare exceptions.

I favor a televised account of the proceedings for several compelling reasons.

First, this is not an ordinary trial, this is the trial of the century for Filipinos. We have never tried a key official for corruption before, much less a president, and its implications are earthshaking. This isn't a purely legal matter, this is a political one. This has far-reaching implications for the future of the country. It behooves the people to know. At the very least, that knowledge should help to stay the hand of current officials from the cookie jar. If we can bring the most popular president of the Philippines to the dock for stealing, we can certainly do it to an obscure or unpopular public official. Who knows? Maybe it will prevent the venal and opportunist from seeking public office in the future by demonstrating to them that they are better off applying their energies to less riskier ventures. I did tell someone in America that my hope in particular is that this trial will dissuade the entertainers in particular from running for public office by showing them there is nothing funny about being a public official.

Quite apart from that, it should be a tremendous boost for national pride. It should raise the stock of Filipinos everywhere. The first two Edsas showed the world we Filipinos were willing to die for democracy. Erap's trial, whatever its outcome—and this being a criminal case, we must presume even a president innocent until proven guilty—should show the world we are willing to live for it.

Second, televising the trial should make it immensely educational in the same way that the impeachment trial was. Of course it could become **too** educational for the comfort of those who came before Erap. Giving the public to see the intricacies of official plunder should impact as well on them. Which is as it should be. The people who huddled at Edsa last April in a parody of people power did have a point when they said it wasn't Erap alone who pillaged the treasury. That is true, but that is not an argument for exonerating Erap by the principle of the equal application of laws. That is an argument only for indicting the others. Imelda first, Cory and Ramos later. They too stand accused of monumental plunder. By all means let us have a first trial—and Erap qualifies for it by the sheer mendacity of his abuse. But why shouldn't we have a second or third or fourth as well? There are no statutes of limitations on plunder. People who stole in the past should be tried, and where found guilty, punished too.

Televising the trial should help stoke questions like this and give rise to public clamor for pursuing what we have begun to its logical end.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Seoul steps up book row with Tokyo

SEOUL—Angered by Japan's refusal to revise controversial history textbooks, South Korea yesterday froze all bilateral military exchanges and canceled a planned visit to Tokyo by one of its top defense officials.

South Korea also revoked permission for two Japanese Navy drill ships to make a port call at Incheon in September. The Japanese vessels carrying graduating naval academy cadets left Japan in April for a navigation exercise to 13 Asian countries.

Seoul also ordered a freeze on opening up the country to Japanese cultural products in protest at controversial Japanese school history textbooks.

Culture and Tourism Minister Kim Han-kil put an indefinite delay on allowing in Japanese pop music, television programs and adult films and animation, a ministry spokesperson said.

"We believe that South Korea-Japanese military exchanges have to proceed on the basis of a correct understanding of history and mutual trust with the support of the peoples of the two countries," the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

A planned visit to Japan next week by Gen. Cho Young-gil, chair of the joint chiefs of staff, will also be canceled, the statement said.

Lt. Col. Chung Sung-yup, a ministry spokesperson, told reporters that military exchanges with Japan will be suspended "until relations improve."

Cho's visit had been planned as part of high-level military exchanges between the two historical rivals. His Japanese counterpart visited Seoul early this year. The two countries' defense chiefs also exchanged visits annually the past two years.

Japan ruled the Korean Peninsula as a colony from 1910 to 1945. Now, Japan and South Korea have a thriving economic relationship and are cohosts of next year's soccer World Cup. Millions of South Koreans and Japanese visit each other's country annually.

The part of the peninsula controlled by North Korea was also under Japanese rule.

Anti-Japanese sentiment has risen sharply here this week after Japan formally rejected South Korea's demand to revise eight middle school history textbooks that Seoul believes whitewash Japan's atrocities during World War II.

South Korea is particularly upset by the failure of those textbooks to mention tens of thousands of Korean and other Asian women who were forced to serve as sexual slaves for Japanese soldiers during the war.

Seoul-Tokyo relations had improved significantly after South Korean President Kim Dae-jung visited Japan in 1998 and pledged to put their thorny history past behind and work for a future-oriented relationship. *AP/AFP*

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Debate over stem cell rages

NORFOLK, Virginia—The debate over the ethics of stem-cell research intensified Wednesday with word that Virginia scientists have created human embryos in the lab solely for the valuable cells.

Medical ethicists say the development complicates the issue at a time when US President George W. Bush is weighing whether federal money should be used for research on embryonic stem cells.

Patient groups favor such research because of its breakthrough potential in treating diseases, while anti-abortion groups and others call such work unethical because it entails destroying the embryos.

"The timing of this has been somewhere between disastrous and horrific," said Arthur Caplan, a medical ethicist at the University of Pennsylvania. The development "throws everything in an uproar" and gives ammunition to those who argue that researchers are headed down a slippery slope.

Embryonic stem cells can mature into any cell or tissue. As a result, scientists say they someday may be used to repair or replace damaged tissue or organs in victims of Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, diabetes, cancer and spinal cord injuries.

Until now, researchers derived embryonic stem cells mostly from embryos left over from infertility treatments. Other researchers have derived stem cells from other sources, such as fat cells, bone marrow and aborted fetuses, though the embryonic stem cells are the most useful.

In the Virginia case, scientists approached donors and informed them that their eggs and sperm would be used to develop embryos for stem-cell research.

Religious broadcaster Pat Robertson criticized the development on his television show Wednesday. "We're on the slippery slope now," he said. "Before long, we'll be harvesting body parts from fully formed people, not just from something in a petri dish. Once you begin this concept of utilitarian use of cells, then everything is up for grabs."

The work was done at the Jones Institute for Reproductive Medicine, a private fertility clinic responsible for the birth in 1981 of the America's first test-tube baby. The findings appeared Wednesday in the journal Fertility and Sterility, a publication of the American Society of Reproductive Medicine. *AP*

Leaders pledge unity under African Union

LUSAKA, Zambia—African leaders pledged Wednesday to stop fighting and increase prosperity under a new African Union, designed to replace the Organization of African Unity, which started out with much the same goals.

The African Union, first proposed in 1999 by Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, replaces the OAU, created 38 years ago to help Africa free itself from colonialist rulers. The leaders hope that a stronger organization, loosely modeled on the European Union, will be more successful at uniting the continent.

Taking a strident tone at the OAU's final summit, Gadhafi said the new union was reserved exclusively for blacks.

"We cannot be neutral here. We are here for the Africans, not the Europeans. We are here for the blacks, not the whites," said Gadhafi, who was greeted with cheers and applause at the summit's closing ceremony.

Zambian President Fredrick Chiluba said African leaders agreed to form a parliament and a central bank, but initially the union would focus on creating a heads-of-state assembly, a council of foreign ministers, a secretariat and a permanent committee of ambassadors.

Chiluba said the talk of greater unity had to be backed by speedy and decisive action.

"Africa does not have the luxury of time," he said. "If we hesitate, or procrastinate in implementing the decisions we have taken concerning the establishment of the African Union, time will pass us by."

The union's charter also calls for a common currency and a court of justice.

Chiluba said the summit endorsed a new strategy for enriching the continent called the New African Initiative.

The strategy merges Omega, a plan created by Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade, and the Millennium Africa Recovery Plan, crafted by South African President Thabo Mbeki, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and Algerian President Abdel-Aziz Bouteflika.

In a news conference Wednesday evening, Mbeki said a committee of 15 African heads of state—including those who crafted the plan—would be created soon to get the work under way.

African countries would under the plan seek partnerships with developed countries, Mbeki said.

Speakers at the ceremony lauded the summit and the birth of the union as a historic event. *AP*

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AN undated family handout photo of Chandra Levy at her San Francisco State Graduation in San Francisco. Levy, 24, was last seen April 30, when she canceled her membership at a Washington health club. AP

Police search Condit home, analyze clues

WASHINGTON—Police are analyzing items they removed from Rep. Gary Condit's apartment for possible clues about the disappearance of former federal intern Chandra Levy.

The search, done with the congressman's consent and in his presence, began just before midnight Tuesday and concluded shortly before 3 a.m. Wednesday.

Several items, which police would not describe, were to be sent to the FBI crime lab in Virginia, said Sgt. Joe Gentile, a Washington police spokesperson.

Police Chief Charles Ramsey said he did not know whether the evidence police took from Condit's apartment contained anything that might help them figure out what happened to Levy, who has not been seen since April 30.

Levy, 24, of Modesto, California, was an intern at the federal Bureau of Prisons. Police searched her apartment and found nothing missing but her keys.

Condit, 53 and married, told police last week that he had an affair with Levy, according to a source familiar with the investigation. His staff had claimed for weeks that they were just goods friends.

The disappearance is being treated as a missing-person case and police have said repeatedly that Condit is not a suspect.

The Washington Post, meanwhile, reported Thursday that FBI agents have interviewed a Pentecostal minister who described an affair between his then-18-year-old daughter and Condit.

The minister, Otis Thomas, was quoted by the Post as saying that Condit had told his daughter never to speak of the relationship.

Thomas said his daughter is afraid to talk with the FBI and has gone into hiding. Thomas, whose church is in Modesto, did gardening work at the Levy home in Modesto, the Post said.

Thomas told the Post that his daughter met Condit at a political rally and ended the relationship about seven years ago.

Marina Ein, a spokesperson for Condit, said the Post report was "discountable." Asked if she was denying the congressman had an affair with the woman, Ein said: "We're not going to get in the territory of accounting for each and every one of the tabloid cases that are presented."

Telephone messages left with spokespersons for the Levys late Wednesday were not immediately returned. Attempts to reach Thomas were unsuccessful.

While police looked for new information, the FBI and the US attorney's office again questioned flight attendant Anne Marie Smith. She has contended Condit asked her to sign a statement denying a 10-month affair she says they had. AP

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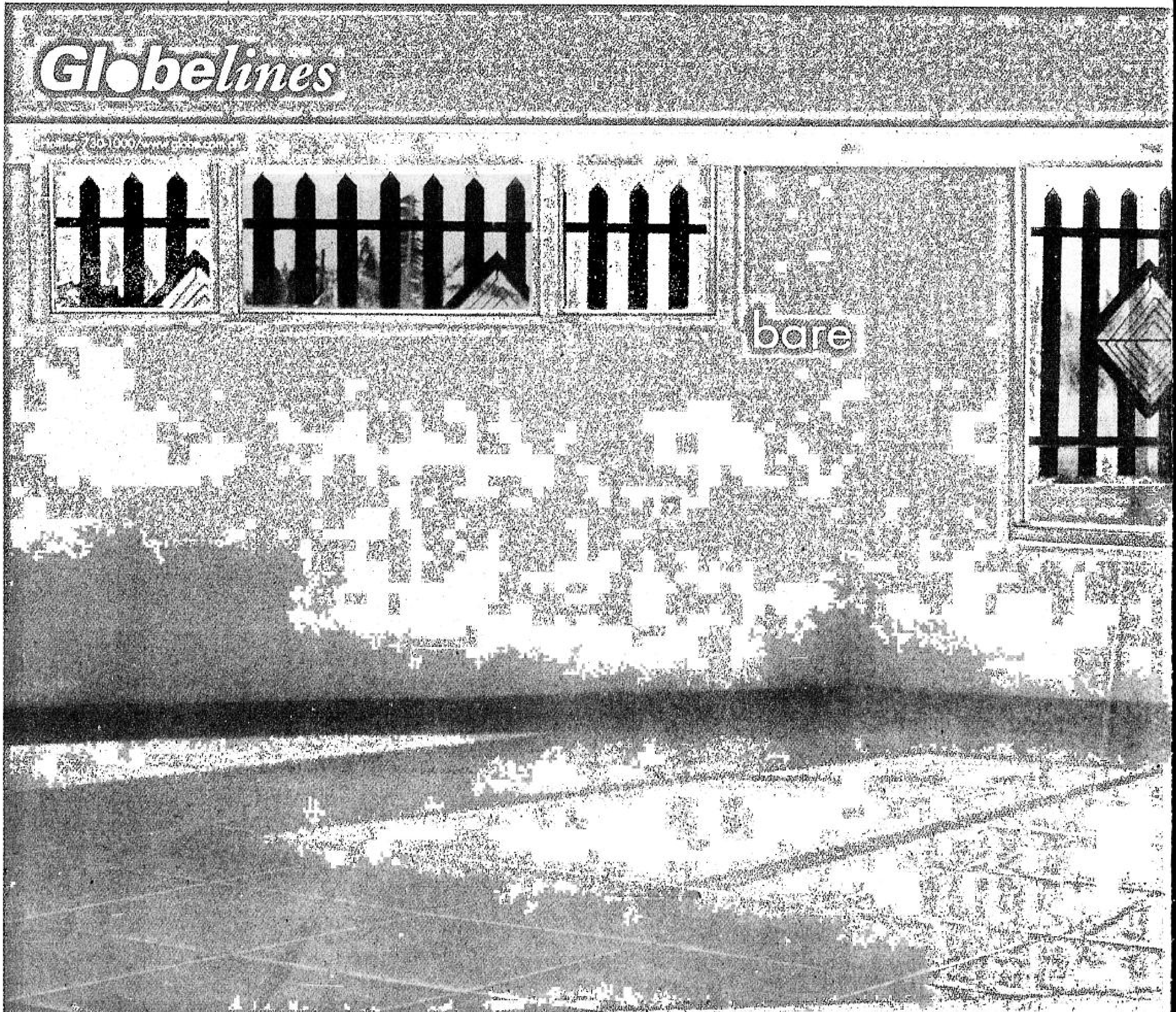

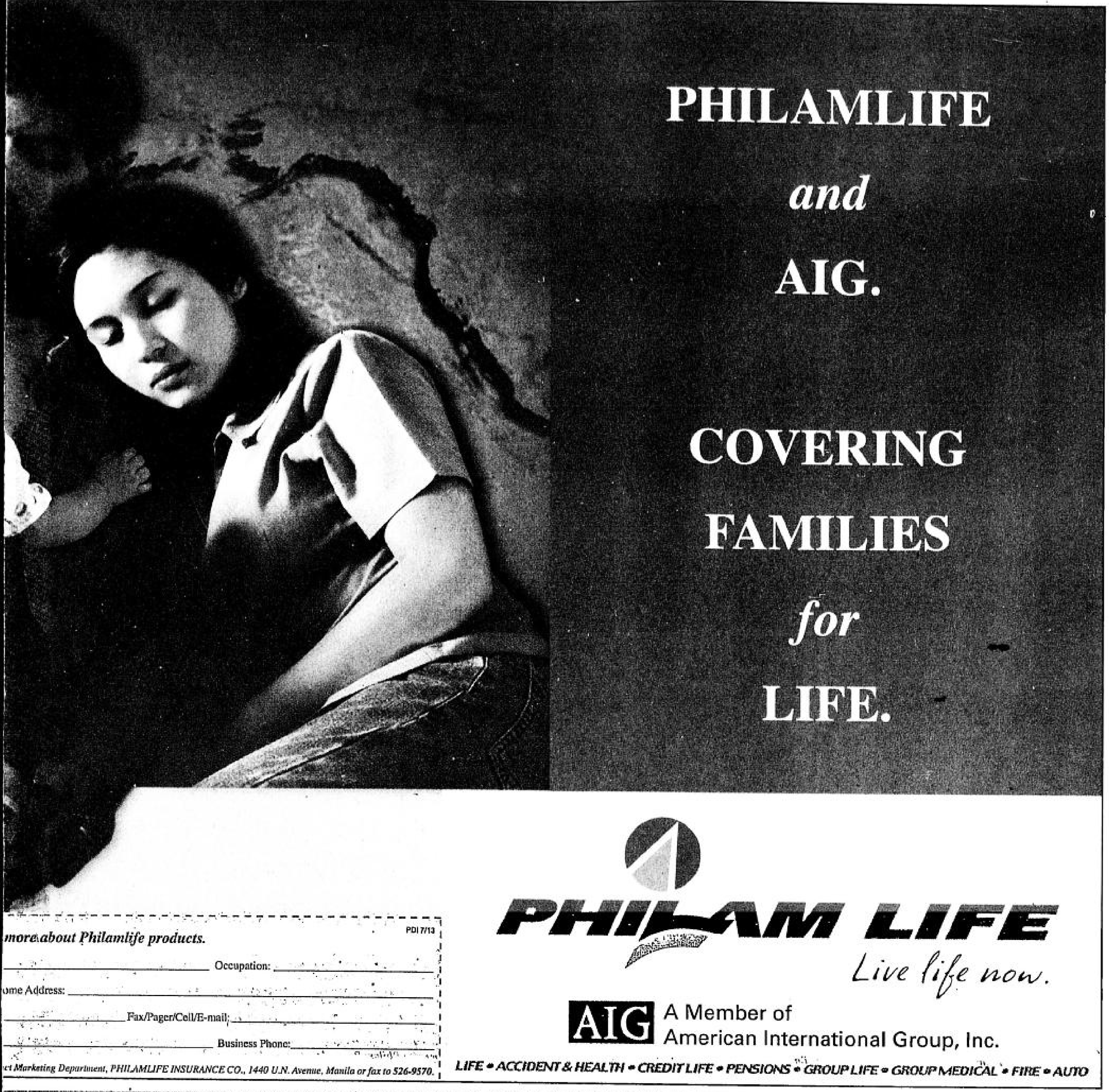

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US reveals it foiled 130 terrorist plots

WASHINGTON—US law enforcement agencies have thwarted 130 terrorist plots targeting the United States over the past two decades, Attorney General John Ashcroft disclosed Wednesday.

But he warned the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other institutions charged with combating terrorism "will not always succeed."

The disclosure follows revelations that Algerian national Ahmed Ressam, arrested in Washington state in late 1999 with bomb-making material and convicted of terrorist conspiracy last April, planned to bomb Los Angeles International Airport.

Addressing the National Governors Association, which wrapped up a counter terrorism summit here Wednesday, Ashcroft did not mention any specific terrorist conspiracies other than Ressam's.

But he said that between 1980 and 1999, the FBI also recorded 327 incidents or situations of suspected terrorism in the United States.

"It is no exaggeration to say that, had the law enforcement efforts that led to the prevention of these acts not been successful, the cumulative death toll would have been substantial," he said.

Winter olympics

The attorney general noted he had made it a "priority" for US law enforcement to ensure the security of the 2002 winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah, which will attract 3,500 athletes and hundreds of thousands of guests.

"We are doing everything we can to ensure that people from all over the world can come to the games and bring their families and enjoy the excitement of world-class athletic competition while feeling safe and secure," he said.

The assurances came as US lawmakers moved to counter what they see as a growing terrorist threat to the country.

The Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives on Tuesday approved a bill providing nearly $5 million for a counter-terrorism fund managed by the Justice Department.

Biowarfare

On the same day, Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson appointed a special coordinator to handle preparations for a possible biological weapons attack on US soil.

Scott Lillibridge, a physician from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will be in charge of detecting such an attack, identifying the biological agent and providing drugs and other medical supplies to the victims.

"I can think of no one better qualified for this critical responsibility than Dr. Lillibridge," said Thompson. "He will provide leadership to ensure we can respond swiftly and decisively should some vicious act of bioterrorism be inflicted upon the American people." ***AFP***

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Nasa: Far planets have water

WASHINGTON—Distant planetary systems, where comets and asteroids swirl around blazing stars, may contain water, an essential ingredient of life, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said.

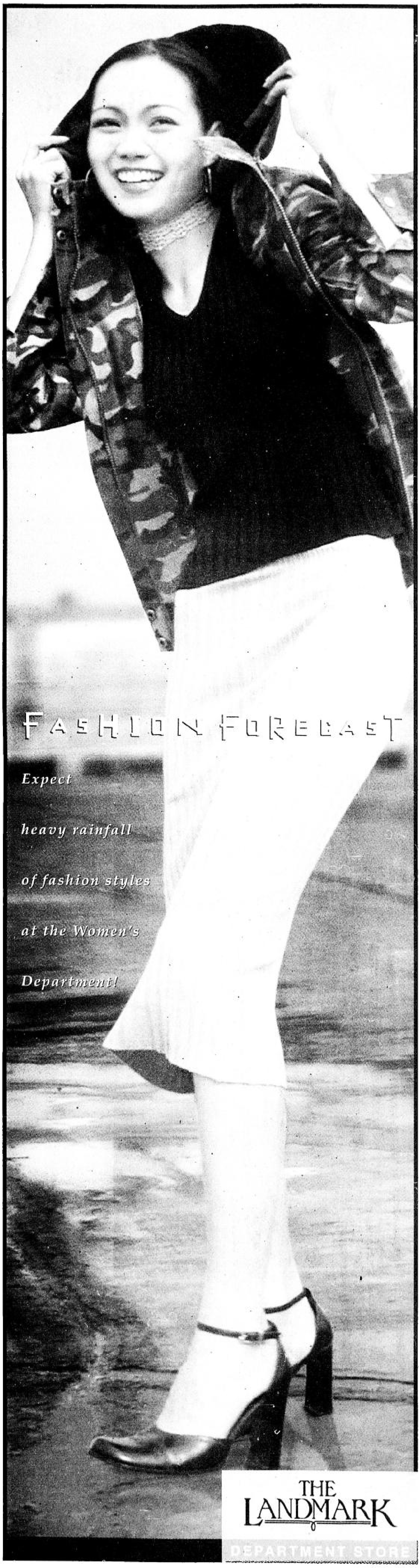
But some scientists believe a Nasa space probe that delivered the news may also have caught a glimpse of a cataclysmic demise awaiting Earth and other planets of the solar system billions of years from now.

Evidence of water vapors were reported by the Submillimeter Wave Astronomy Satellite, a small radio observatory launched by Nasa in late 1998, as it focused on a giant star designated by astronomers as IRC+10216 located 500 lightyears from Earth in the direction of the constellation Leo.

"What makes the results we are reporting today (Wednesday) so unusual is that we have found a cloud of water vapor around a star where we would not ordinarily have expected to find water," said Gary Melnick of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, that manages the mission.

Astronomers have concluded that the vapors are rising from icy comets under the heat radiated by the star, which is much hotter than the Sun, according to Nasa.

The comet circling IRC+10216 is similar to the original mass of the so-called Kuiper Belt, a collection of comets that is orbiting the Sun beyond the orbit of Neptune, according to the report. ***AFP***



Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Pangasinan floods blamed on logging

SAN MANUEL, Pangasinan—Residents in two villages here are blaming indiscriminate logging for their misery after their houses were swamped by lahar-like floods last week.

Major sections of the Lapalo and Sto. Domingo villages here are still flooded. The floods carried with it more silt that residents suspect come from the denuded mountains of the upstream Cordillera.

Mayor Salvador Perez said the Toboy River, which flows from the Bued River in Benguet, and its tributaries traverse the villages.

The Department of Public Works and Highways earlier planned to build a dike along the river but for some reason, the project did not push through.

But a dike could have been of little help to the residents, who said the lahar-like flood destroyed concrete fences, smashed houses and buried them in mud.

"Aside from a dike, the Toboy River badly needs dredging because it is already heavily silted," Perez said.

But what Perez did not mention was how indiscriminate logging in the Cordillera largely contributed to the river's siltation, a problem that appeared when typhoon "Feria" came.

Gina Guiang, a Sto. Domingo resident, shivered as she recalled the onslaught of the flood. "It was horrible. The water came swiftly and we did not have time to move our belongings," she said.

She said this was the first time their village was affected by a lahar-like flood in 60 years. "Flooding did occur in the past years, but this was the first time that the flood carried sticky mud," she said.

But Sto. Domingo residents are luckier than those of Lapalo village where many houses were destroyed by strong winds and floods spawned by Ferin.

Guiang said it was only minutes when the two villages were submerged under 10 feet of floodwater.

"Residents were caught off-guard," she added.

The Sto. Domingo elementary school and barangay high school buildings were also submerged in mud. There are still no classes in both schools.

The call for a total ban on commercial logging has failed to take off.

Several attempts to legislate a ban on commercial logging were blocked by lawmakers who argued that a total ban on logging was not the answer to the country's disappearing forests.

Then senator now Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez was among those leading the opposition to a total commercial logging ban.

Alvarez said he preferred what he called a sustainable forest management to a total ban on logging.

Alvarez succeeded in blocking a bill filed by then senator Orlando Mercado calling for a total ban on commercial logging.

Mercado said under a selective ban on logging, loggers could still continue cutting trees in areas where the ban is in effect and claim that these logs come from areas where there is no logging ban.

The call for a total ban on logging remained unheeded even after a killer flood killed thousands of people in Ormoc City.

The flood was believed to have been aggravated by the denudation of forests around Ormoc. *Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cancer victim seeks help

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—A former base worker has appealed for help so he can continue undergoing treatment for cancer, believed to have been caused by toxic waste contamination.

Ciriaco Manzano, 48, worked as a utility man at the Naval Magazine (NavMag) of the former US naval base here. After the pullout of US troops, he became a volunteer of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and was assigned to help in cleaning the area.

The Woodward Clyde environmental baseline survey on Subic Bay Freeport recommended the NavMag cleanup before any construction, earth-moving operation or development is undertaken in the area. The area, however, is already being used for tourism and industrial purposes.

Manzano is a half-Aeta who resides in the Iram resettlement in Olongapo City. He and his wife Estrelita, a third generation Aeta, recalled working as volunteers and, while cleaning up the dumps, they were exposed to hazardous waste such as asbestos without protective gear.

They said the bunkers, which were used for storing bullets, weapons and missiles, were rented out as canteens and were used as a refuge of volunteers during heavy rains. *Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Maguindanao House seats vacant

COTABATO CITY—Maguindanao has no representatives in Congress because of a still unresolved election controversy pending at the Commission on Elections.

Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco said despite the June 30 nationwide oath-taking rites of winning candidates in the May 14 elections, there are still provinces in the country like Maguindanao, whose seats in the House of Representatives remain vacant.

Tancangco said no elected candidate can assume office unless he is proclaimed winner by the board of canvassers and the proclamation was backed by certificates of proclamation and canvass as proofs.

A candidate may assume office only after taking his oath of office before a member of the judiciary, said Tancangco.

In the case of Maguindanao, she said, there were election protests from contending parties that include petitions to nullify election results.

In the first district, the Comelec has yet to decide who won between reelectionist Rep. Didagen Dilangalen and Arnel Datukon, and between former Comelec Commissioner Japal Guiani and former Rep. Guimid Matalam for the second district.

Tancangco considered Maguindanao as one of the problem areas during the May elections because even election results in the gubernatorial race have yet to be resolved by the Comelec and the Supreme Court.

Reelectionist Gov. Zacaria Candao was contesting Andal Ampatuan's proclamation by the provincial board of canvassers due to fraud and terrorism.

Tancangco, however, explained that all proclaimed winners declared by the board of canvassers are authorized to assume to their respective offices.

"The proclamation (of the winning candidates) will stay until such time that it will be revoked (by the Comelec)," Tantangco said. *Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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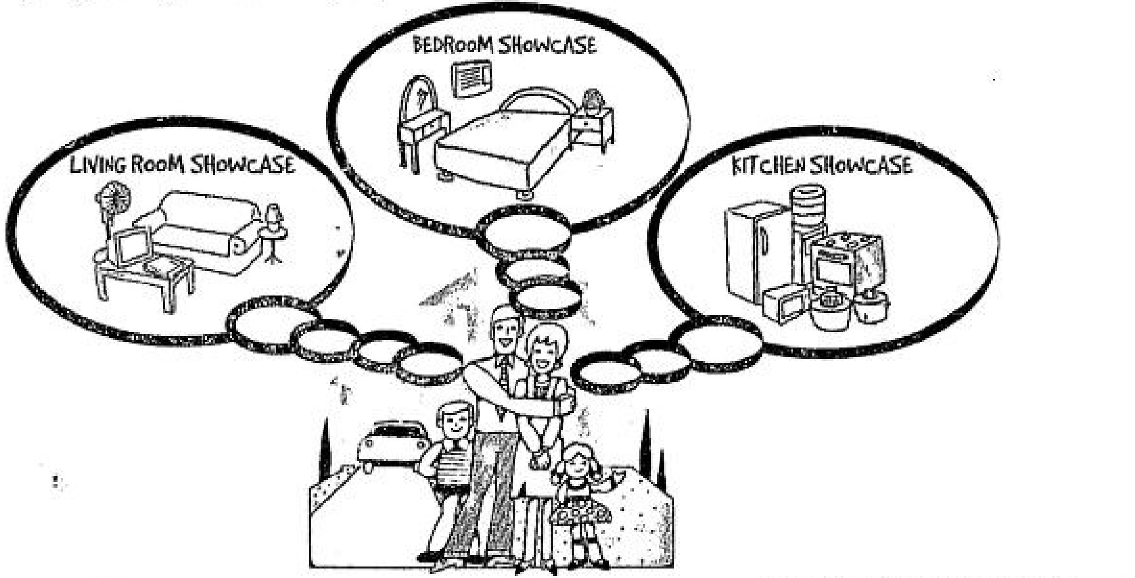

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35.56 cms (14") Sony Colored TV	Lamp Shade	Imarflex Turbo Broiler
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Governor joins mayor in fray against media

BY ALEX V. PAL
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Gov. George Arnaiz has his own style of confronting reporters whom he feels have gone overboard in their attacks. He does not get mad. He gets even.

Rather than ban them from his press conferences like what Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña has done, the governor said he launches his own counter-attack by campaigning for a boycott of the media outlets that have "unjustly" criticized him.

"If there is a radio station, which tells lies, I will tell my supporters in the mountains not to listen to that radio station. I also tell them not to buy those newspapers, which unjustly malign me," the governor said.

Arnaiz, who is the provincial chair of the Nationalist People's Coalition, did not mention the newspaper or radio station which have become the target of his ire.

He did not also say when the last time was that he called for a boycott of a media outlet.

But during the last elections, the opposition coalition composed of the Lakas-NUCD and the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino had bought several block-time slots from radio stations in Negros Oriental before the campaign period.

Arnaiz was asked to react on the ban imposed by Mayor Osmeña of Cebu City on reporters of Sun*Star Cebu and radio station dyHP of the Radio Mindanao Network.

Osmeña has barred these reporters from his press conferences, claiming that these media outlets had a "political agenda" and were used during the last elections by his bitter political rival, former Mayor Alvin Garcia.

Garcia is one of the owners of Sun*Star Cebu. He ran for a third term but Osmeña defeated him in what was dubbed as the closest mayoral race in Cebu in recent years.

Radio station dyHP is being managed by Cynthia Barte whose husband, Venustiano, was a candidate for councilor under Garcia's local party.

Both dyHP and Sun*Star Cebu denied Osmeña's allegations. A Sun*Star Cebu editorial last week even tagged the ban "illegal" and a violation of the government's policy on transparency.

But Arnaiz said he does not mind if journalists criticize him as long as they tell the truth.

His only request, he said, is to make sure that the news article comes out balanced. "This is for your own protection as well because you may get in trouble with what you say and (you may) be sent to jail," he said.

To ensure that journalists get his side of a story, Arnaiz offered the communication facilities of his office so he could be reached through his cellular phone.

"There are only two journalists here who call me through my cellphone. But . . . the others . . . may use my office telephone," he said.

Land devoted to agri shrinking

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Overpopulation and rapid industrialization has pushed agriculture back to the hills, threatening Northern Mindanao's food supply.

Studies made by the Department of Agriculture (DA) in the region showed that the area of arable lands converted to subdivisions and industries doubled in the past two years.

"We are under extreme pressure to keep the balance of food production with our population," Rufo Chan, DA regional director in Northern Mindanao, said.

According to Chan, the area devoted to agriculture shrank from 656,220 hectares to 423,626 hectares after the Strategic Agriculture and Fishery Development Zone or SAFDZ was established two years ago.

He said this further strained the food supply of Cagayan de Oro City and the provinces of Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Camiguin, and Bukidnon.

In Cagayan de Oro City, more than 200 hectares of rice farms in Barangays Canitoan and Iponan were converted to housing subdivisions, said Assistant City Agriculturist Godofredo Bajas.

This despite an ordinance passed by the local city council limiting land conversion to only 15 percent of Cagayan de Oro's 41,280-hectare land area.

Bajas said since most of Cagayan de Oro's land area is located in mountainous terrain, subdivision developers have resorted to converting the lowlands. It resulted in a deficit in food supply in Cagayan de Oro, with the city depending on the nearby province of Bukidnon for its vegetables, rice, corn and meat.

Chan said the government is left with no other option but to double food productivity through technology and increase land use for agriculture.

But he said the government is financially strained to bankroll infrastructure projects that could increase food production.

A P350-million irrigation system in Baungon, Bukidnon, is still on the drawing board due to lack of money. *Froilan Gallardo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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25.0%	167,500	45,928	31,781	25,342	18,196	14,668	13,284
30.0%	201,000	42,866	29,662	23,653	16,983	13,690	12,399
35.0%	234,500	39,804	27,543	21,963	15,770	12,712	11,513
40.0%	268,000	36,743	25,425	20,274	14,557	11,735	10,627
45.0%	301,500	33,681	23,306	18,584	13,344	10,757	9,742
50.0%	335,000	30,619	21,187	16,895	12,131	9,779	8,856

MODEL : CANTER FE635

TERM		12	18	24	36	48	60
%	D/P	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
20.0%	149,000	54,474	37,694	30,057	21,582	17,398	15,756
25.0%	186,250	51,069	35,338	28,179	20,233	16,310	14,771
30.0%	223,500	47,665	32,982	26,300	18,884	15,223	13,786
35.0%	260,750	44,260	30,627	24,422	17,536	14,135	12,802
40.0%	298,000	40,856	28,271	22,543	16,187	13,048	11,817
45.0%	335,250	37,451	25,915	20,665	14,838	11,961	10,832
50.0%	372,500	34,046	23,559	18,786	13,489	10,873	9,847

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VOLUNTARY PROGRAM

CHEd backs changes in ROTC course

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The chair of the Commission on Higher Education is supporting the clamor for voluntary enrollment in the Reserved Officers Training Corps.

"It has been the position of the commission that changes should be implemented in the ROTC," said CHEd chair Estér A. Garcia, who was here to grace the induction of officers of the Rotary Club of Iloilo.

Garcia told the INQUIRER that since 1997, the commission has been coordinating with the Department of National Defense and Congress to push for sweeping changes in the program.

The proposed changes include the voluntary enrollment of students in the program and an option to enroll in other fields like civic-welfare, disaster preparedness and anti-drug abuse.

Garcia said they had also asked lawmakers to act on pending bills seeking changes in the ROTC program.

Currently, the ROTC is a requirement for the graduation of all male students in college. DECS Order No.9 dated Feb. 1, 1990, provides that a male student will not be allowed to enroll in the fourth year of his academic course without having completed the ROTC.

The ROTC has become one of the main sources for reservists and regular members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Data from the AFP website showed that last year alone, 113,332 young men and women completed two years of basic ROTC.

Student groups and several school owners and administrators in Manila, however, are calling for the ROTC's abolition.

Protests have rocked colleges and universities in Metro Manila. Cadets were reported to have walked out of their ROTC classes to dramatize their demand to abolish the program.

Militant youth groups in Iloilo City also planned to hold protest actions to push for the abolition of the ROTC.

Education Secretary Raul Roco has also expressed support for changes in the ROTC program to make enrollment in it voluntary on the part of students.

Several legislators joined the call to make the ROTC a voluntary program.

Earlier, schools in Metro Manila foiled another attempt by hundreds of cadets to walk out of their ROTC classes.

Cadets at the University of Santo Tomas were prevented by guards and ROTC officers from leaving the school campus to protest the program.

Students had burned ROTC uniforms and walked out of their ROTC classes.

Militant groups that had previously led the charge failed to sneak into the UST gates that were secured by school guards and members of the ROTC military police.

A security guard said protesters were caught off-guard after school officials decided to schedule separate ROTC classes for freshmen and sophomore cadets. The training for sophomore cadets, who had joined the earlier boycotts, was set in the afternoon.

As calls for the abolition of the ROTC grew louder, cadet officers have become softer in exerting their authority over the trainees.

School officials have reportedly also relaxed their rules after students and cadets boycotted the ROTC training sessions the past two Sundays following a series of protest actions against the military training institution.

"Officers do not harass cadets anymore," a UST student was quoted as saying. "They're more accommodating now."

ROTC officers are traditionally known to abuse their authority, punishing cadets for the slightest infractions.

But since the boycotts started, the officers have become very friendly, Dangzalan said.

The clamor for the abolition of the ROTC began after one of its officers, UST engineering student Mark Welson Chua, was kidnapped and murdered following his exposure of anomalies in the school's military training program.

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ROUNDUP

12 kids fall ill after eating shrub seeds

TAGBILARAN CITY—Twelve children fell ill after eating the seeds of a shrub growing near their playground in Tubigon town, about 47 kilometers northeast of this city. Of the 12, six were confined at the Gov. Celestino Gallares Memorial Hospital (GCGMH) in this city. The rest received medical treatment at a community hospital in Tubigon. Dr. Lester Batoon of the GCGMH said the children were not in serious condition and were expected to be released Wednesday. The poisoning victims were identified as Marjorie Notarte, 6; John Paul Cosquejo; Decrisito Andal, 5; Charlotte Coritico, 5; Glendyl Notarte, 4; and Ronel Tanu-an, 4, all residents of Barangay Ubujan, Tubigon town. They were playing in Barangay Ubujan about 11:30 a.m. when they decided to pound the *tuba-tuba* seeds they had found previously. One of the children ate the seeds and the others followed. According to an article in the April 2001 issue of the Agriculture Monthly Magazine, the *tuba-tuba* can be used as a pesticide by spraying the pounded parts of the seeds on insects.

Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

Mayors elect leader

DUMAGUETE CITY—Bacong Mayor Lenin Alviola of the Lakas-NUCD was elected president of the Municipal Mayor's League of Negros Oriental on Wednesday. At first, the election appeared to be heading for a stalemate after Alviola initially got the support of half of the province's 20 town mayors. Ten other mayors backed his rival, Valencia Mayor Rodolfo Gonzalez Jr. Alviola clinched the position after he talked with Gov. George Arnaiz of the Nationalist People's Coalition and got his endorsement. Sources said the governor had set some conditions in exchange for his support of Alviola's bid. When reached for comment, Arnaiz refused to reveal what he asked Alviola in exchange. He said with the election results, "we sent a strong signal that the presidency of the mayors' league is not under the control of the Lakas-NUCD."

Alex V. Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau

New division chief named

TACLOBAN CITY—Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominguez has been named new commander of the 8th Infantry Division based in Catbalogan town in Samar. He replaced Gen. Rufo de Veyra, who was designated superintendent of the Philippine Military Academy in Baguio City. A simple turnover ceremony was held Thursday morning in Camp Lucban, the 8th ID headquarters, in Barangay Maulong, Catbalogan. Prior to his new assignment, Dominguez was commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division based in Pagadian City.

Cynthia A. Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau

No. 1 in rape cases

CALAMBA CITY—Southern Tagalog had the most rape cases of all the country's regions in the first five months of this year, according to Sen. Loren Legarda who is also an official of the Citizen's Drug Watch Foundation. Bicol came in second with 124 cases and Central Luzon was third with 96 cases. Lawyer Anton Paredes, a staff member of Legarda, said rape convicts account for 52 percent of the 1,768 inmates on death row in the country.

Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Population growth

DAVAO CITY—Southern Mindanao's average population growth rate is high compared to developed and still developing countries. The region's population is about a third of Mindanao's total population of 16,205,487. General Santos City, with a population of 411,822, topped the list with a population growth rate of 5.05 percent, the highest among 10 areas in Southern Mindanao, according to Commission on Population director Ignacio Arat.

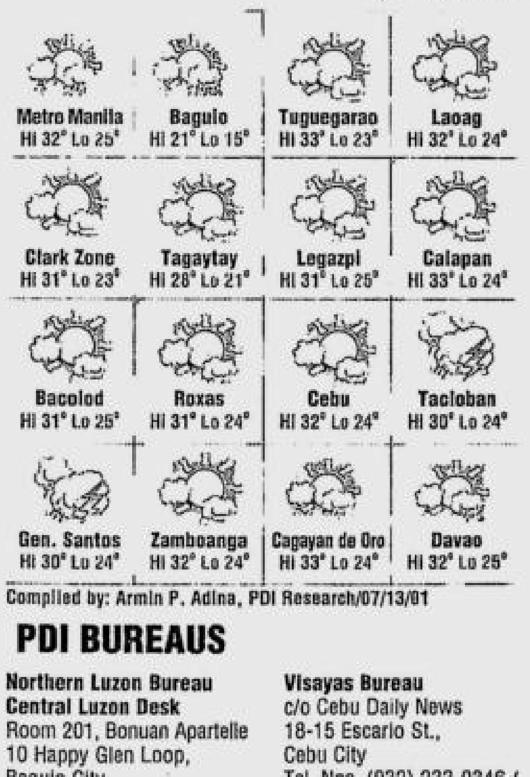
Cebu homecoming

JOSEPH Y. Punay and Pedro Edar, both alumni of the Manuel A. Roxas Memorial School of Fisheries (MARMSF) of Agujo, Daanbantayan, Cebu, are urging all alumni of the school since 1953 to register in preparation for their alumni homecoming set for March next year.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA



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Bacolod Hi 31° Lo 25°	Roxas Hi 31° Lo 24°	Cebu Hi 32° Lo 24°	Tacloban Hi 30° Lo 24°
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Compiled by: Armin P. Adina, PDI Research/07/13/01

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Most Negros rape victims children

BY ROMY G. AMARADO
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Most of the rape victims in Negros Oriental in the last 18 months are children, according to records of the police Women and Children's Concerned Desk (WCCD).

The records said 145 rape cases were reported from January last year to June this year. Of the number, 122 involved children, the same records showed.

There were 51 rape cases recorded by the WCC. Children were the victims in 42 of these cases.

About half of the victims were children aged 12 years old and below and the other half were 15 to 17 years old.

The youngest of these victims was a four-year-old girl who was raped by his uncle in Dumaguete City.

Police recorded 94 rape cases last year. Children were the victims in 70 of these cases.

Twenty-four of these children were only 12 years old and below when they were molested last year. The rest of the victims were within the age range of 13 to 17 years old.

The youngest rape victim last year was a two-year-old girl from Dumaguete. The suspect was the girl's uncle.

In the first quarter of this year, police recorded two incest cases where the victims were only 11 and 16 years old.

Insp. Rosalinda Abellon, head of the WCCD, told the INQUIRER that many women, including young girls, now have the courage to report abuses committed against them because they are now aware of their rights.

She said the WCCD's creation was instrumental in educating women and children of their rights.

Aside from conducting awareness seminars and related activities, the desk also informs women and children of what to do in cases of abuse.

MNLF rejects autonomy

COTABATO CITY—The Nur Misuari-led Moro National Liberation Front has rejected the new Muslim Autonomy Act (RA 9140) that calls for the separate holding of a plebiscite and regional elections this year.

"The passage of the law is a violation of the 1996 peace agreement," Misuari said Tuesday while attending a two-day MNLF leadership meeting in Zamboanga City.

RA 9140 is the final version of the new autonomy act that seeks to amend RA 6734, the law that created the four-province Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Clarita Callar, Commission on Elections director for Central Mindanao, said RA 9140, signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo on June 22, calls for the holding of a plebiscite on Aug. 14 and the election of ARMM officials on Nov. 26.

"The calendar of activities will have to be published in local newspapers with general circulation in the ARMM," Callar said.

But Misuari said holding these political exercises this year would mean "disregarding all the resolutions of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)."

The 56-member OIC, in its latest resolutions, appealed to the Philippine government "not to take any unilateral measures or conduct unilaterally a plebiscite in the ARMM," Misuari said.

Misuari said the enactment of the new autonomy law was a "blatant disrespect" of the OIC resolutions.

Misuari's three-year term as ARMM governor should have ended in 1999 but he was allowed to continue in office in a holdover capacity following the failure of Congress to enact on time a law that would amend the one that created the ARMM and expand the autonomous region.

The MNLF rejection of the new autonomy law in Mindanao would mean another extension of Misuari's tenure as governor and chair of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD).

Misuari is also special envoy to the OIC.

Misuari said he believes that any law that follows the 1996 peace pact signed between the government and the MNLF should have the approval of the other signatories of the peace agreement.

"The MNLF sticks to the world view that the enhancement of the peace process must be done through and with the participation of the government, MNLF and OIC," Misuari said.

Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Aetas demand troop pullout

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—Aetas have hounded the provincial capitol here since last week, asking officials to rid their village of Army soldiers and to help solve the disappearance of two tribal leaders.

In batches, they trickled here from their mountain abode in Barangay Nabuklod in Floridablanca town to also complain of "human rights violations as a result of intensified militarization" by the Army's 24th Infantry Battalion.

The village lies on the western boundary of Pampanga, Bataan and Zambales.

In separate meetings with Gov. Manuel Lapid, Vice Gov. Juan Miguel Arroyo, Pampanga Rep. Zenaida Ducut and Provincial Administrator Benalfre Galang, Nabuklod Aetas claimed that government troopers have disrupted their lives, restricted their movements and brought them fear.

"Last June was worst," Ric Guiao, spokesperson of the Central Luzon Aeta Association, said in Kapampangan.

According to the CLAA report, Army soldiers have conducted a census of the Nabuklod population from June 4 to 5, held illegal searches in the homes of four Aeta leaders on June 18 and placed residents under surveillance.

Army soldiers allegedly ridiculed and mistreated Aeta women, one of whom was asked to give sexual services for P2,000, the report said.

Soldiers also threatened the lives of the Aetas since their nightly drinking binges always ended up in shooting sprees, the report said.

It added that the Army has either sought the surrender of Aeta leaders or placed them in its order of battle or a list of targets for execution.

The "targets" reportedly included Nabuklod barangay captain Angel Binuran and barangay councilman Nelson Mallari who have been missing for the last two weeks, it was learned.

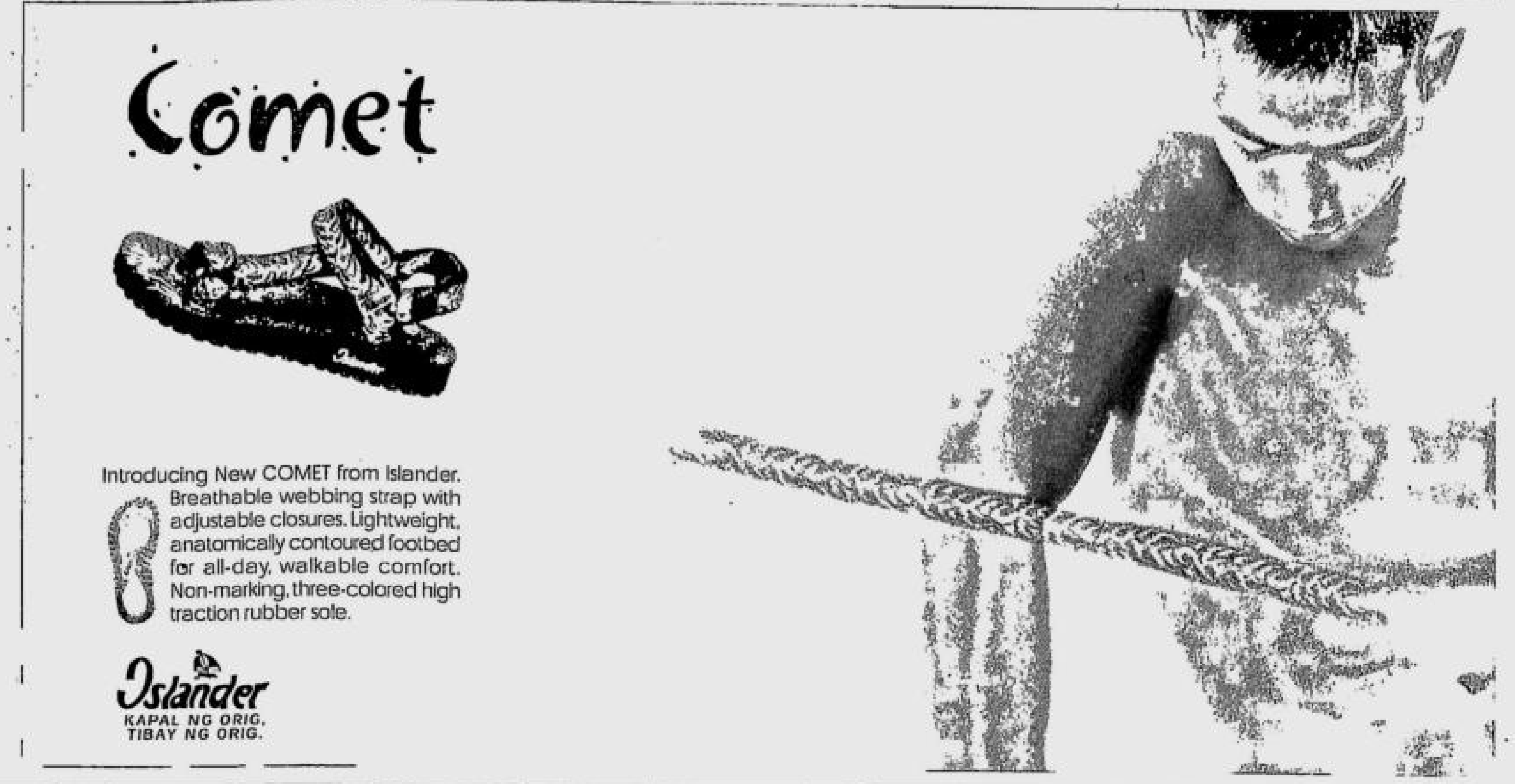
Capt. Arnold Dizon, the 24th IB's civil military operations officer, declined to comment on the allegations of the CLAA and Nabuklod Aetas.

Dizon, in a text message, advised the INQUIRER to wait for the result of a fact-finding mission that councilors in Floridablanca ordered on Monday.

But local reports said Dizon had blamed the CLAA for the disappearance of Binuran and Mallari, saying "Left-leaning" nuns took these men in their custody.

Members of the 24th IB have begun a counterinsurgency program in Nabuklod since December 1999 to regain control of a hill that was a common route for New People's Army rebels operating in the highland of the three adjacent provinces, Army officials earlier said.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk



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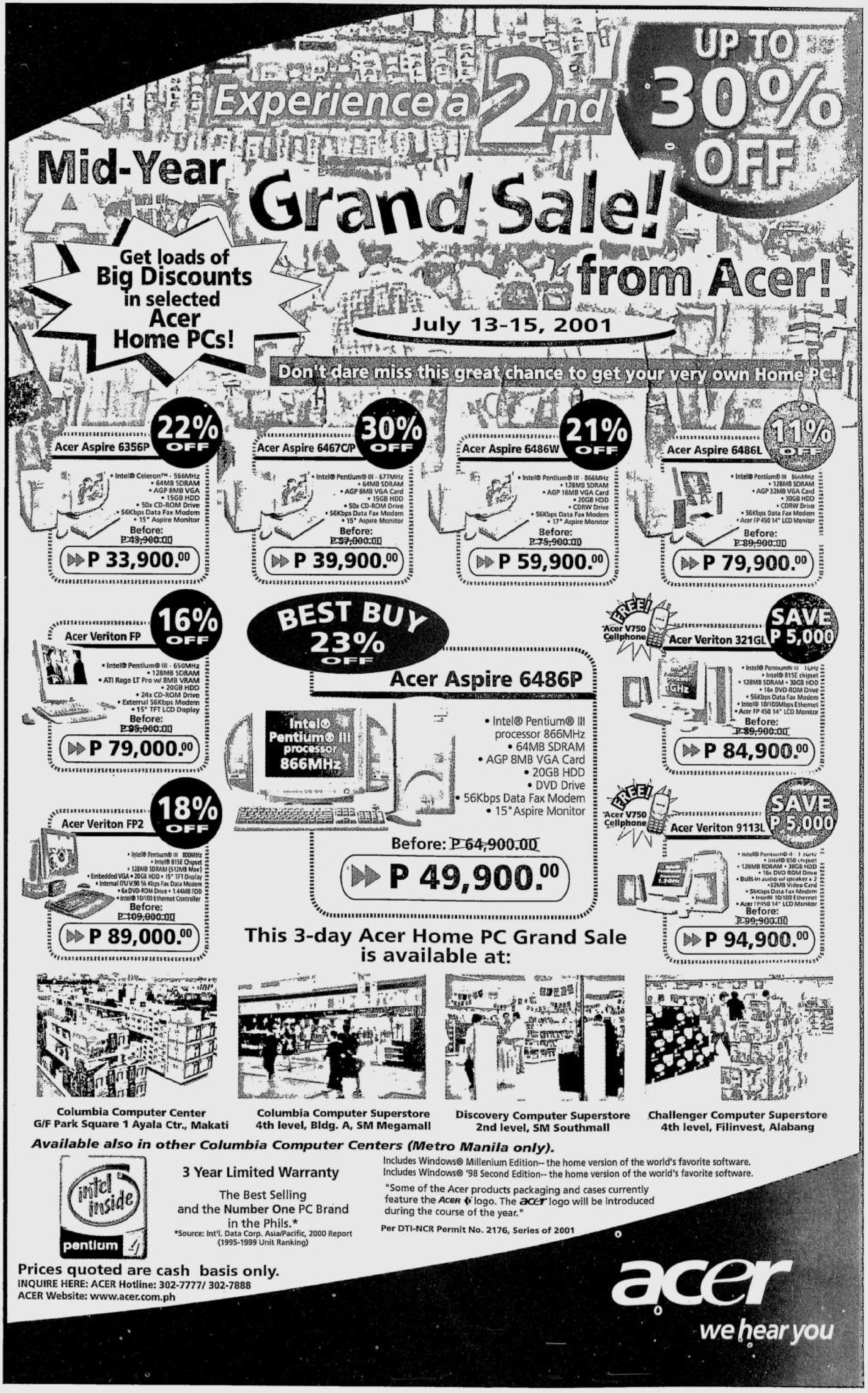

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Estradas may lose Cuevas as lawyer

(From page A1)

The law's pertinent provision reads: "It is a condition of the pension . . . that no retiring justice during the time that he is receiving said pension shall appear as counsel before any court in any civil case wherein the government . . . is the adverse party, or in any criminal case wherein an officer or employee of the government is accused of an offense committed in relation to his office, or collect any fee for his appearance in any administrative proceeding."

"It is very clear that a former justice of the Supreme Court cannot appear as counsel for former President Estrada and (former San Juan Mayor) Jinggoy Estrada. Unless of course, (he) claim(s) that (he does) not receive any pension from the government," Perez said.

Cuevas retired as a justice of the appellate court before being appointed to the Supreme Court. He submitted a courtesy resignation as a high court justice when Corazon Aquino was installed as President in February 1986.

Although it is not clear whether Cuevas receives a pension from his Supreme Court stint, DOJ sources say it is possible that Cuevas gets a pension of around P50,000 a month as a retired Court of Appeals justice.

Surprised but unsure

Perez said the government would have to determine first whether Cuevas is indeed receiving a state pension before government prosecutors take any legal action objecting to the apparent violation of the conditions of such a pension.

But "if he is not receiving a pension, then I don't see any reason why he cannot continue appearing for former President Estrada," Perez told a press conference yesterday afternoon.

He admitted that he and other prosecutors present in Estrada's arraignment for plunder last Tuesday were surprised when Cuevas formally entered his appearance as the ex-president's defense lawyer.

"But at that time, we were all unsure about the prohibition so nobody brought it up during the arraignment," Perez said.

Cuevas told reporters after his first appearance as Estrada's lawyer that he would not charge Estrada for his legal services, adding that any compensation would depend on the ex-President's "magnanimity."

What about Narvasa?

Former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa also sits among the lawyers defending Estrada during Sandiganbayan hearings.

Perez noted, however, that Narvasa has not entered a formal appearance as defense counsel.

"I'm sure former Chief Justice Narvasa is receiving a pension from the government and therefore is clearly disqualified from appearing as (Estrada's) counsel," Perez said.

He added: "In fairness to the former chief justice, he has not formally entered his appearance in the case and therefore the disqualification cannot apply to him since he is not really appearing as counsel."

The secretary added that Narvasa's appearance as one of Estrada's lawyers in his impeachment trial "was not questioned because (it) was not a criminal case against an official of the government. It was a different proceeding."

New bid for house arrest

The Estradas' lawyers launched yet another bid for house arrest yesterday, asking the Sandiganbayan to permit father and son to "go home" to their Polk Street mansion in San Juan "to prepare for (the) pre-trial and trial" of a separate perjury case.

This, as Jinggoy Estrada's doctor, who has just concluded tests on the former mayor's heart condition, said that the examination showed that Jinggoy "suffered a heart attack three months ago" and needed more medical tests.

In an interview over GMA-7, Dr. Roberto Anastacio of the Makati Medical Center said Jinggoy would have to stay longer in the hospital, but ruled out the need for treatment abroad.

He said that Jinggoy "did not feel" the cardiac arrest that left his heart "injured."

The defense lawyers asked the Sandiganbayan's first division to grant detention leave to their clients ahead of the pre-trial of the perjury case, scheduled for Aug. 2.

"We are raring to go as far as the scheduled pre-trial is concerned and would like to prepare for it as well as we can, a sentiment we hope the prosecution shares," lawyers led by former senator Rene Saguisag said in their motion.

"Someone elected by millions in a democracy deserves private time to prepare for his defense in his home. His son was also elected by our people. Their lives, honor, liberty, their everything, are at stake," the five-page motion said.

Loi claims persecution

Following reports that she may still be arrested and prosecuted on graft charges, Sen. Loi Estrada accused the government of persecuting her family.

"She suspects that they want to throw the whole Estrada family in jail," said her chief of staff and legal counsel Rufus Rodriguez.

He said such an arrest would be "a pure form of persecution against her for being a spouse of President Erap Estrada and for no other reason."

Rodriguez, a former immigration chief, said an arrest would be a "clear case of harassment to prevent her from effectively performing her duties as opposition senator at the onset of the Senate sessions," which will open on July 23.

The former first lady's camp was reacting to reports quoting Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio Jr. as saying that government would still have to submit evidence against Senator Estrada since the Sandiganbayan rejected the Ombudsman's motion to withdraw the graft case against her.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto has filed a motion for reconsideration that is pending in court.

The senator is accused of receiving a portion of P130 million worth of tobacco excise taxes allegedly given to her husband while he was President.

Yesterday, the Sandiganbayan's third division allowed the Ombudsman to withdraw still another case against Joseph Estrada charging him with violating the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials.

The case is one of five criminal cases the Ombudsman wants withdrawn as part of the prosecution's strategy to strengthen the plunder case. *With reports from Armand Nocum and Volt Contreras*

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US Pacific Fleet commander in Manila; Basilan on agenda

(From page A1)

Agence France Presse quoted Reyes as telling reporters after the meeting that he and Blair "briefly talked about the Basilan hostage crisis."

Reyes stressed that Blair did not offer US military assistance to pursue the Abu Sayyaf.

At yesterday's meeting, Blair was accompanied by his staff—Ambassador Charles Twining, foreign policy adviser; Rear Adm. Steven Smith; and Philip Klapakis, Philippine Desk officer of the Pacific Command.

Col. Russel Lewey and political counselor Steve Zate, representatives of the US Embassy in Manila, were also present.

Stepped-up security

The Philippines has stepped up security in all airports and around the US and Israeli embassies following reports that a "Lebanese terrorist" was on his way to carry out attacks, Agence France Presse quoted officials as saying yesterday.

Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for the President, said the government had received information that a man working for Saudi billionaire Osama bin Laden was planning to enter Manila.

"Yes, there has been such a report," Tiglao told reporters, but declined to name the source of the information.

He said Manila had ordered "heightened security" around the embassies.

Press reports quoting immigration sources had identified the alleged terrorist as Lebanese Ahmad Yasser Ismail.

The reports said Ismail planned to enter the Philippines and meet his contacts to map out the attack on the US and Israeli embassies.

Chief Supt. Marcelo Ele, aviation security group commander, said his office was in contact with the US Federal Aviation Administration and the American intelligence community.

He said security in Philippine airports had been reinforced against the "possibility of hijacking and other types of terrorism on the civil aviation industry."

Philippine immigration officials were ordered to watch out for other organized groups, including those from Japan, Ele said.

"We are assuring our citizens that our airports nationwide, whether domestic or international, are safe from any terrorist attack from within or from outside," he said over ABS-CBN television.

Bin Laden has been accused of masterminding twin bomb attacks on US embassies in Africa that killed 213 in 1998.

Technical assistance

Last month, Malacañang admitted that the US government had been providing "technical assistance" to help resolve the hostage crisis that began with the May 27 abduction of an original group of 17 Filipinos and three Americans from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan.

It is believed that this assistance involves sophisticated surveillance equipment designed to monitor and trace the location of radio and phone transmissions by enemy forces.

The Abu Sayyaf is known to be using satellite phones.

A team of experts from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation has set up shop in Zamboanga City to "coordinate" with Philippine military and police officers in charge of the hostage crisis.

According to a number of freed hostages, the Burnhams, both missionaries, are alive and well.

The Abu Sayyaf had earlier announced the beheading of the third American hostage, Guillermo Sobero, but his body has not been found.

Observers said Blair's visit could indicate an imminent "decisive engagement" between government forces and the Abu Sayyaf.

They pointed out that the government launched a major offensive against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu to end last year's Sipadan hostage crisis on the day then US Defense Secretary William Cohen left Manila after a two-day visit on Sept. 14-16, 2000.

Cohen's visit coincided with the last phase of a joint training course involving Filipino and American special military forces in Nueva Ecija.

Blair arrived a few days later on Sept. 24-26 for the joint military exercises along the western coastal areas of Luzon. *With reports from AFP*

Jimenez wails: Why me?

(From page A1)

rocket scientist to know that things are now convoluted in this country. What is wrong is now right and what is right is now wrong," Jimenez told reporters at a luncheon yesterday.

"Like in Mindanao, for example. Why is the government spending millions on freeing the hostages (of the Abu Sayyaf) when 75 million Filipinos are (held) hostage by poverty?" he asked.

He was reacting to a petition filed by the Department of Justice with the Supreme Court on Wednesday seeking the cancellation of his P1-milion bail bond and the nullification of a Manila judge's order granting him temporary liberty.

The DOJ filed the petition on behalf of the United Sates government.

Jimenez is wanted by the state of Florida for conspiracy to defraud the US government, tax evasion, wire fraud and illegal campaign contributions to the Democratic Party.

Sen. Franklin Drilon said the government should work hard to get Jimenez extradited so that the United States could help it bring Charlie "Atong" Ang, a crony of former President Joseph Estrada, back to the country to face criminal charges.

Ang is Estrada's co-accused in a plunder case. Plunder is a non-bailable offense and is punishable by death.

"If we do not fulfill our end of the deal regarding Mark Jimenez, you do not expect a favorable treatment on the other side of the fence," Drilon told Senate reporters.

There are mutual obligations to be fulfilled by contracting parties that enter into an extradition treaty, according to Drilon.

Drilon, a former justice secretary, said he was a signatory to the extradition treaty signed by the Philippine and US governments in 1993.

Jimenez is peeved that the INQUIRER reported that the DOJ filed the petition with the Supreme Court on behalf of the US government.

"Why are you saying that the US government is behind the request, when there is no indication of such in the (DOJ) petition?" Jimenez asked this reporter.

"There were no US documents cited in the petition. Of course, you have a deadline to fulfill but shouldn't you bother to check whether this is really true? What if I say I am the son of Jesus Christ, will you write it down, too?" he said.

Jimenez said he was prepared to "exhaust all legal remedies" to prevent his return to the United States.

So far, Jimenez has gained points against his enemies with Manila Judge Guillermo Purganan's decision on July 4 granting him provisional liberty in exchange for a P1-million bail bond.

Purganan has been tasked with hearing Jimenez's bail motion before his possible arrest for his extradition.

Asked about his plans if the bail court orders that he be arrested, Jimenez said he was prepared to take the case to the Supreme Court.

"I'm a believer in due process. I believe in the Supreme Court being the highest court. I will not preempt the law," he said.

"My arrest and extradition will not be my decision, also not your decision but theirs (referring to the Supreme Court justices). They're just dispensing the law and I'm just defending myself," Jimenez said.

He resents an INQUIRER report in November 1998 describing him as a fugitive from American justice.

"It was only in April 1999 when the state of Florida issued the warrant of arrest against me. Earlier than that I was already being called a fugitive," he complained.

"A fugitive is one who runs away, I ran for Congress," he said.

Jimenez is now preparing for his new job as representative of the sixth district of Manila.

For starters, he plans to file a bill creating a single incentive house for investors. Other measures still in the works will focus on the economy and employment creation.

Jimenez indicated his preference for Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia as the next Speaker.

"He has experience and I believe experience is one of the best assets of a leader," Jimenez said.

On July 23, he plans to attend the first State of the Nation Address of President Macapagal-Arroyo at the opening of the 12th Congress.

Trouble is, Jimenez fears that some parties are not keen on letting him be seen at the House of Representatives when the President delivers her speech.

He believes this is the reason some people are working for his extradition to the United States.

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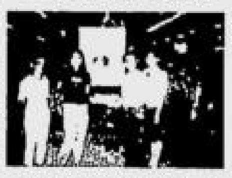

1) Yolanda R. Tirol
2) Christine Cerqueda
3) Joel Buenaventura
4) Patricia A. Segundo
5) Lowel Buenaventura
6) Jennifer L. Dumo
7) Leo C. Reyes

CALIFORNIA PISTACHIOS

Military questions MNLF: Whose side are you on?

(From page A1)

Mabanta said members of the 1st Scout Ranger Battalion under a certain 1st Lt. Luntok engaged Abu Sayyaf men for about an hour starting at 10:50 a.m.

He said that one soldier was wounded and that the troops recovered rounds of ammunition for 57 mm recoilless rifles and 60 mm mortars.

Another encounter occurred at 12:10 p.m. at Barangay Bulingan, but with no casualties on either side.

In the third encounter at 5:30 p.m. in Barangay Bohe Ebu, members of the 7th Scout Ranger Company under a 1st Lieutenant Cabunoc clashed with about 50 Abu Sayyaf men dressed in black fatigues.

Three soldiers were wounded and according to Gepilano, the bodies of two suspected bandits were recovered.

Mabanta said the series of encounters was "a good thing" as it showed that "our forces are making contact."

"This means that our intelligence is getting better," he added.

No man's land

Lantawan Mayor Tahira Ismael said some 500 families had fled their homes and sought shelter in Barangays Atong-atong and Tairan.

Barangay Kumalarang, a known exit point of the Abu Sayyaf from Isabela and entry point to Lantawan, has also been declared a no-man's land.

Former Provincial Jail Officer Ibno Ordonez said no one could be seen there at night except for military and militia men on patrol.

He said at least 300 families in Kumalarang fled to Barangays Panigayan and Sumagdang and to Isabela after Abu Sayyaf commander Hamsiraji Sali alias Jose advised residents to abandon their homes to avoid being caught in the crossfire.

Ordonez quoted the Abu Sayyaf as saying that it would attack Kumalarang because many soldiers were based there.

But Capt. Arnel Bautista, commander of the 24th Special Forces Company, told the INQUIRER Kumalarang was peaceful.

"As long as we're here, the people are safe. We will give them protection as long as they want," he said.

Under siege

In Cotabato City, MNLF commanders complained to MNLF chair Nur Misuari that their farm settlements in Basilan had been under siege by government troops.

Bashir Jailani told Misuari at the Bangsamoro Armed Forces command conference in Zamboanga City that the military offensives in MNLF settlement areas in the past days had led them to doubt the government's sincerity to pursue the 1996 peace accord.

He also cited an incident in Masola town last month, when soldiers allegedly harassed an MNLF camp, leaving seven civilians dead.

Reacting to the Jailani report, Misuari, who is also governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said the government appeared to be disregarding the peace agreement.

He said that while the MNLF had been trying to abide by the peace agreement, "I think there are people who are out to destroy (it)."

He called for an immediate end to the military offensives to avert another war with the MNLF.

Petition

In General Santos City, more than 40 members of the local media have signed a petition demanding the immediate relief of Col. Pedrito Magsino, commanding officer of the 601st Army Brigade based in Malungon, Sarangani province.

Magsino and the journalists are at loggerheads because he whisked off the captured Abu Sayyaf leader Nadzmie Saabdulla alias Commander Global to Manila on Monday without allowing for interviews or photo opportunities.

Global, the chief of staff of the Sulu-based faction of the Abu Sayyaf, and his three aides were arrested Sunday by a team composed of agents of the police, military and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency in Barangay Calumpang in the city.

In the petition, the journalists said Magsino's act was motivated by a desire to grab credit for the capture of Global and his aides.

They said they would withdraw support from the Army unless Magsino was relieved of his post, which he assumed in March. ***With reports from Carlito Pablo in Manila; Aquiles Z. Zonio and Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Misuari warns gov't of 'another Frankenstein'

COTABATO CITY—Nur Misuari has expressed fears that the government's reported move to reunite renegade members of the Moro National Liberation Front with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front would create "another Frankenstein."

Misuari, governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and chair of a divided MNLF, issued the statement in reaction to reports that the 15-member MNLF executive council succeeded in bringing about an MNLF-MILF merger at a joint meeting held here on July 9.

"This will not add anything to our cause, now that they are unified. I hope they will not become, as (Senate President) Aquilino Pimentel said, another Frankenstein," he said.

Misuari was referring to intelligence reports indicating that the bandit group Abu Sayyaf was a creation of the previous administration.

"All (monsters) that the state has organized eventually turned their ire on the government after benefiting from (it)," Misuari said.

Muslimin Sema, Cotabato City mayor and member of the 15-member executive council, confirmed the MNLF-MILF merger and said it was now stronger than the Misuari-led MNLF.

But Misuari denied this, saying many of the MNLF state revolutionary committee chairs had allied with him.

He warned confused MNLF members that "those who are misled will be written in the blackest pages of our history because what they do amounts to betrayal of our cause, our organization and our people." ***Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Kin of poor hostages remind GMA: Please, don't forget us

LAMITAN, Basilan—As soon as Virginia Rosadeno and Tarcila Malonzo were introduced, they embraced and wept in each other's arms.

"It's like they've known each other for long and they were comforting each other," said United Methodist Church Pastor Randy Rosadeno, who accompanied his mother Virginia to the Malonzo house here.

The two women are the mothers of Abu Sayyaf hostages Fe Rosadeno and Reina Malonzo.

Virginia said she decided to leave her ailing husband in Brooks, Palawan, to oversee the negotiations for Fe's release.

She arrived here with her son on July 9 to meet with relatives of the other kidnap victims.

"The hostages' families appear to have been forgotten. In some way, I want to show the others that I am one of them," Virginia said.

She said she felt Tarcila's suffering. "We both have a daughter in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf," she said. "Our President also has a daughter. I hope she understands our situation, and I hope she finds a way to have our children released safely."

Tarcila aired an appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo, saying in between sobs: "Madame President, you told me you would help us when you visited Lamitan (on June 18). We are still hanging on to your promise. Up to now we have not received even a letter from you."

She also begged the Abu Sayyaf to release their children and said their families could not afford to pay ransom.

Tarcila's husband Raul works in a coconut plantation. Virginia said she and her family sold their small fishing boat and two hogs to raise the P20,000 ransom demand for Fe's release.

Her son said the sale amounted to only P14,000, so they borrowed the rest.

The Rosadenos said they had tried to seek help from Malacañang but members of the Presidential Security Group sent them away.

Officials of the United Methodist Church shouldered the Rosadenos' plane fare.

Tarcila said her family was to have taken part in a dialogue during the President's visit to Lamitan.

"But they did not let us join the conference, so when I had the chance, I jostled with the crowd at the hospital to get near the President," she said.

When Ms Macapagal flew to Puerto Princesa City on the same day, Virginia said, "no one let me in at the meeting even when I shouted and pleaded." ***Julie Alipala-Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

PPC solons on brink of breakup

(From page A1)

A meeting will be held today between the two blocs to forge what the blocs called a "formidable" group in the Senate leadership race.

The two other contenders within the PPC are Drilon and Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Impasse

"I am not prepared to enter into that power sharing scheme," said Drilon who's widely believed to be President Macapagal-Arroyo's choice for the top Senate post.

"I would like to report that there is an impasse in the discussion in the concept of term sharing. This morning's meeting did not produce any substantial agreement," Drilon said in a news briefing after the meeting with Cayetano at the Westin-Philippine Plaza. Sen. Juan Flavier acted as "honest broker."

Asked whether he was indeed the President's choice, Drilon said he would "neither confirm nor deny the story" first reported in the INQUIRER.

Flavier assured that the PPC will continue to have the majority in the Senate but admitted it was "a fragmented majority" with its members supporting four senators.

Informed sources told the INQUIRER yesterday that after the failure of the Drilon-Cayetano talks, talks will resume between the bloc of senators belonging to the Lakas-NUCD party and that of former congressmen elected to the Senate who ran on the PPC slate.

Senators belonging to Lakas are Cayetano, Loren Legarda, Flavier and Robert Barbers. The so-called "newcomers bloc" are made up of Senators Arroyo, Manny Villar, Ralph Recto and Francis Pangilinan.

The alliance of the two blocs would make them a group of eight. A source inside one of the blocs told the INQUIRER that the group plans to reach out to two senators who ran under the PPC banner but are considered to be "floating"—Senators Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Serge Osmeña.

To win the plum, a candidate should get the votes of at least 13 of the 24 senators.

Swing votes

They said that the Arroyo bloc consisting of Villar, Recto and Pangilinan actually made up the swing votes in the Senate.

This is contrary to a diagram published early this week by the INQUIRER which listed Senators Ramon Revilla, Robert Jaworski, Noli de Castro and John Osmeña as the swing votes.

The INQUIRER source said Revilla, Jaworski, De Castro and Osmeña could be considered in the bloc of "floating" senators on the opposition side.

Sen. Serge Osmeña and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., on the other hand, make up the bloc of "floating" senators on the administration side.

The source also said that the Arroyo group had been the "most courted" in the past two weeks because apart from making up one-third of the 12 PPC senators, they are solid as a group.

"Today's meeting is a prelude to more meetings aimed at ironing out further any remaining kinks in the resolution of the Senate leadership race," the source said referring to the Cayetano-Arroyo blocs.

The sources said that talks between the two blocs started even before President Macapagal endorsed Drilon for the Senate presidency to some PPC senators.

The sources said that President Macapagal met last July 1 with the PPC senators contending for the Senate presidency and prohibited them from reaching out or crossing to the opposition whose lone candidate is Sen. Edgardo Angara.

The President, they said, wanted the Senate leadership issue settled within the 12 PPC senators.

Violation

But they said the President violated her own prohibition when she endorsed Drilon to the Senate top post.

The sources said Drilon, probably aware of the "potential" of the alliance of the Cayetano and Arroyo blocs in the Senate presidency race, went to the President last July 8 to seek her endorsement.

In that meeting held in Malacañang, Drilon reportedly "poured his heart out to the President" and told her that he, among the contenders, could reach out to the Angara camp if he (Drilon) were Senate president.

The meeting was also attended by Gabriel Claudio, head of the Presidential Liaison and Legislative Office.

The sources confirmed that the President called some PPC senators the next day, including Cayetano, to inform them of her preference for Drilon.

"(The PPC senators) were apprehensive that what happened in the House would also happen in the Senate," the sources said, referring to the alliance that was formed between Lakas and the opposition National People's Coalition in supporting the bid of Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia.

The Lakas-NPC alliance threatens to cause the breakup of the administration coalition in the House.

LP-LDP alliance

With a never-say-die spirit, 60 congressmen, mostly belonging to Abad's Liberal Party and the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, and including some independents, committed to stop De Venecia's sure-footed march to the podium of the Speaker.

In a meeting at the Manila Golf Club in Forbes Park, Makati, the presence of Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar (Independent), wife of former Speaker and now Sen. Manuel Villar Jr., came as a surprise.

She vowed to stick it out with Abad "till the end," even if she noted that "many of you will be surprised why I am here."

"The people with this group have helped Manny a lot," Ms Villar said when called up to speak.

Palace still bullish despite weakening peso

(From page A1)

Tiglao said resolving law and order problems, including a Moro rebellion in Mindanao and a wave of abductions in Manila, was one area where Ms Macapagal felt she could make a difference.

The President had earlier created a National Anti-Crime Council and revamped the Philippine National Police to effectively counter heinous crimes.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho pointed out that the Abu Sayyaf hostage crisis and the spate of kidnappings had adversely affected the economy.

He said the kidnappings slowed the flow of portfolio and direct investments into the country and further weakened the peso.

From its Wednesday's close of 53.065, the peso yesterday closed at 53.08 to the dollar.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the Bangko Sentral did not intervene in the foreign exchange market even after the peso fell to a five-and-a-half month low.

Buenaventura attributed the peso's slide to profit taking by banks, which "took advantage of nice levels to sell" dollars.

But traders said the Bangko Sentral aggressively sold dollars, accounting for a third of the $119 million traded at the Philippine Dealing System.

"We are approximating levels during the time of President Joseph Estrada. It's as if Erap (Estrada's nickname) never left," said a trader from a local bank.

On Jan. 17, a day after the Senate impeachment court voted not to open the second envelope related to the bank account of Jose Velarde, which is believed to be an alias of Estrada, the peso closed at P52.78 to $1.

On Jan. 18, the peso closed at a record low of P54.79. The following day, it dropped to a day low of P55.75 but bounced back to close at P47.50 after the military threw their support behind People Power II that toppled Estrada.

Traders said the Bangko Sentral's intervention in the afternoon enabled the peso to close by almost eight centavos more than Wednesday's close.

Buenaventura hinted yesterday morning that the Bangko Sentral would intervene if necessary. "Some people will regret it (buying at a high level)," he said.

Tax reform

On tax reform, Tiglao said there was a consensus in the Cabinet that taxes on people living on fixed incomes had to be lowered.

To offset the loss of revenue, the government would try to prevent individuals and small businesses from slipping through the tax net.

"A lot of effort in the tax system would have to be directed towards the underground economy . . . to sectors where tax collection has been quite weak," Tiglao said.

Camacho said Malacañang "will ask Congress to legislate a modified gross income tax system to attract those in the underground economy to surface."

The finance chief said the Cabinet would prepare amendments to the Tax Reform Act of 1997 to simplify the system, reduce allowable deductions and bring down the rate for both individual and corporate income taxpayers.

Camacho said the government was prepared to bring down the corporate income tax from the current 32 percent to ease the burden on businesses.

The country's inefficient tax system and poor revenue collection have been blamed for the rising budget deficit.

Still, Camacho said the economy could start recovering by the first quarter of next year, the period analysts expect the US economy to start bouncing back.

"I think we would have a real recovery by the first quarter of next year and we would see stronger growth, stronger exports and eventually, a stronger peso," he said. ***Reports from Reuters and Clarissa Batino***

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Racist message written in victims' blood

(From page A1)

A BODY is removed from the Gonzales home where three family members were massacred on Wednesday. They were stabbed and shot to death. REUTERS

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, Philippine Consul General Libran Cabactulan said he personally visited the house yesterday but was barred from entering while investigators searched for evidence.

Cabactulan said Task Force Tawas, composed of 20 homicide detectives, "have theories but these are all speculations for now."

The investigators are looking at the client list of Mr. Gonzales' legal firm for any possible "revenge killing" angle, the Australian newspaper Daily Telegraph reported. The police have not ruled out either that the triple homicide was a consequence of a botched robbery or something more personal.

Up to 40 police officers reportedly searched the Gonzaleses' home, the gardens, roofs and drains of nearby houses yesterday.

The bodies have been brought to a local morgue for autopsies, Cabactulan said, adding that forensic findings would not be available for a week.

More than one killer?

The family, which lived in the leafy middle-class suburb of North Ryde, was stabbed to death in a ferocious attack described by police as an "outrage."

The couple's 20-year-old son, Sef, a law student, discovered the bodies when he returned home in the early hours of Wednesday after a night out with friends.

The Sydney Morning Herald said detectives believed mother and daughter were already dead when Gonzales returned home and was also brutally murdered.

According to the report, the investigators think that Lowiva and Clodine were killed some time in the late afternoon after returning from a lunch in a restaurant with Teddy.

Police believe that between the time that Teddy returned home and Sef found the victims Wednesday night, more than one killer entered the home, the Herald Sur reported.

Police spoke briefly yesterday to Sef, but he was too traumatized to help with the investigation and was being counseled at a local church, according to the Telegraph.

Sef is now in the custody of his grandmother and an uncle who lived across the road, the papers said.

The Sydney Morning Herald said Teddy Gonzales was found stabbed to death in a hallway while his wife's throat had been cut. Both victims had also been stabbed repeatedly.

Their daughter, a final-year high school student at a prestigious Catholic private school, was found in an upstairs bedroom, her throat cut also.

Detectives described the house as having been ransacked.

The family reportedly moved to Australia from Manila in the early 1990s. They moved into their North Ryde home last December, according to one report.

Cabactulan said that the consulate had no records of the Gonzaleses, noting that they had likely acquired Australian citizenship.

Family in Baguio

In Baguio City, the Gonzaleses' hometown, Teddy's brother asked the Philippine government to actively participate in the Australian police probe into the killings.

"We want to know the truth," Frederick Gonzales said, as he fought back tears in the family's hometown in northern Baguio City.

"We urge the Philippine government through the consul to Australia to seriously look into (the murders) so that we will know the truth. We want justice."

Frederick, the owner of Baguio's Forest Inn, said he learned of the killings only Wednesday night and had yet to get in touch with authorities in Manila.

But a Baguio-based relative told the INQUIRER that Richard Go, a cousin of Ted, alerted his relatives Tuesday evening, setting off a series of telephone calls to Filipinos based in Sydney.

Frederick said he was to fly to Manila later Thursday to meet with officials at the Department of Foreign Affairs to facilitate a quick visa for Sydney.

"Australian authorities must investigate this seriously," Gonzales said.

He said the family had yet to receive word from Sef and that they want the remains flown back to the Philippines.

"We want them here, but it depends on what will be discussed there (Sydney)," Gonzales said.

In shock

His sister, lawyer Annie Gonzales-Tesoro, Baguio manager of the Securities and Exchange Commission, has filed for a leave from work and was on her way to Australia when the INQUIRER checked late Thursday.

"(Tesoro) seemed calm. I was with her on Wednesday and I had no inkling this tragedy happened. I was a little embarrassed. We are all shocked," said Helen Tibaldo, Tesoro's friend and the regional director of the Philippine Information Agency.

But Ted's brother-in-law, Dr. Ronaldo Paraan, told the INQUIRER by phone Thursday that the families of the victims were heartbroken. He was on his way to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, where he had booked for a flight to Sydney.

Paraan is married to Lowiva's sister, Annie Paraan, a manager at the Equitable-PÇI Bank in Baguio.

"We are, of course, in shock," Paraan said, adding that the families have not received any formal communication yet from the Department of Foreign Affairs, and have been relying for news on Cable News Network broadcasts and newspaper reports.

'Nasty quarrel'

Telephone lines in Baguio burned around the clock as relatives and friends of the victims tried desperately to unravel the sketchy details reaching them.

The Baguio relatives, still reeling from killer Typhoon Feria, got another rude shock when they learned of the murders on the same day they happened.

"I had just survived Typhoon Feria. We never realized we'd be bigger victims because of Australia," one female relative said.

Lowiva, who comes from the Baguio-based Claridades family, and Ted had kept in close touch with their relatives in their hometown, a family friend said.

Friends and relatives sifted through various reports, trying to separate fact from rumor. Reports from the Filipino community in Australia, for instance, made mention of an Asian rival who reportedly had "a nasty quarrel" with Ted's siblings.

A close friend of the family told Agence France Presse that two weeks before the murder, Sef called his relatives and told them an Australian teenager tried to mug him while on his way home.

The family said it was not clear whether this could have anything to do with the murders, but stressed all angles should be explored.

So much in love

Friends and neighbors in Sydney also expressed shock over the killings of the Gonzaleses, who were described as friendly, devout Catholics, the Sydney Morning Herald reported.

"They were just so much in love it was incredible to see," Pat Carne, who managed a business next to the Blacktown law office that the Gonzaleses had been running for the past six years, told the paper.

"They walked hand-in-hand everywhere they went. Even if they were just going downstairs to the car park. Whenever you saw them they were holding hands, smiling at each other. Their love was so obvious it struck you as something absolutely wonderful," she added.

"Ted told me, 'I'm the luckiest man in the world, I've got a lovely wife and lovely family. What more could I want?' I remember the day he told me that. You could see it was true," the Herald reported Carne as saying.

"Oh God, no. He was such a nice man. She was so kind," cried Kathleen Abrot, a client of Gonzales upon learning of the murders.

The family prayed together on Sundays and were regulars at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Blacktown before they moved across town, the Herald Sun said in its report.

"There was a Mass at 8 o'clock every morning and they used to come to that maybe three or four times a week," said the local priest, Fr. Kevin Dadswell.

"His wife used to come here on Sundays. She was very quiet and very well dressed. They seemed a close-knit family."

"We are all so shocked. Why would anyone want to do such a horrible thing to such nice people?" family friend Irene David said. ***Reports from AFP; TJ Burgonio; Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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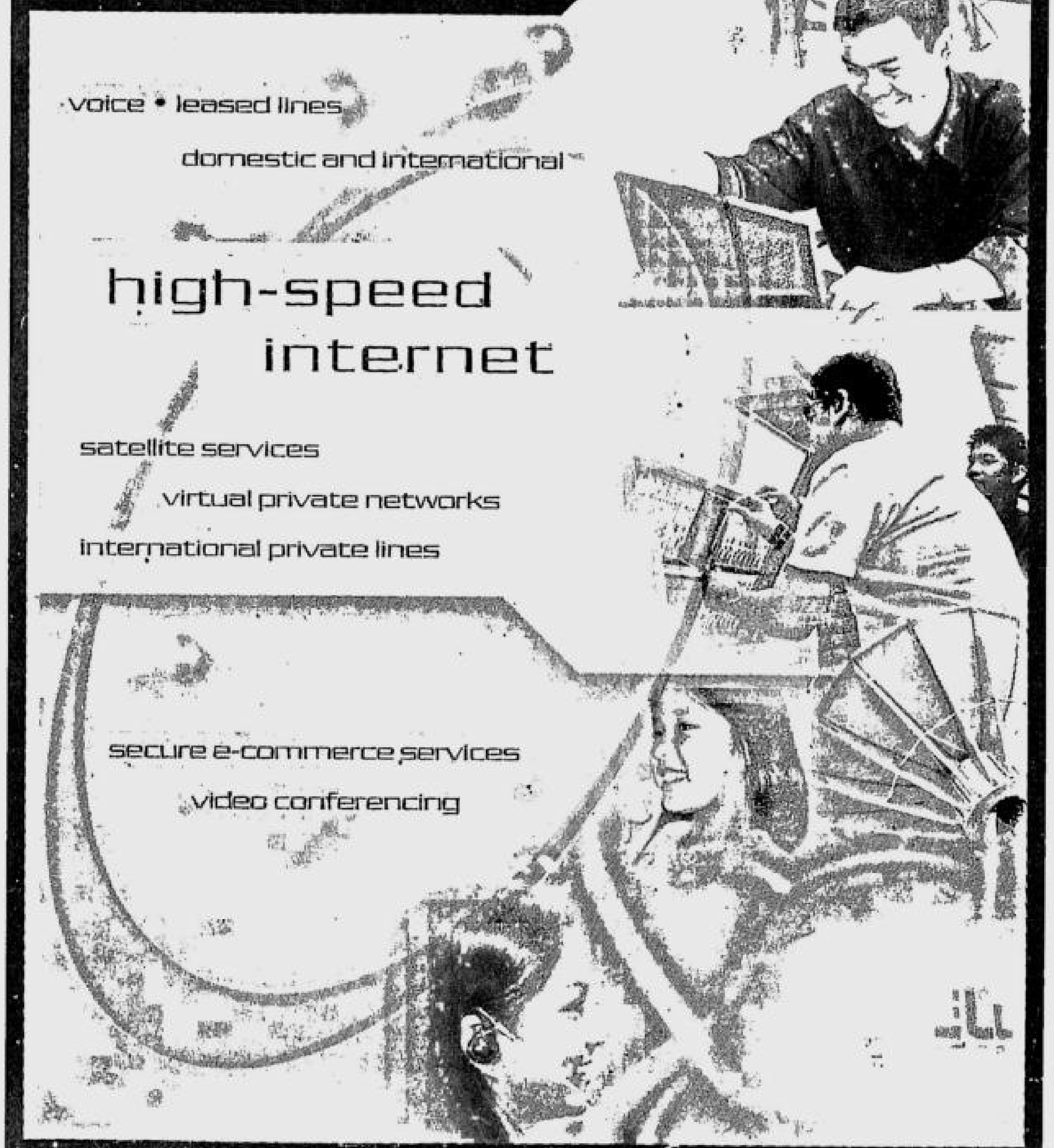

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Delariarte leads CAP-Southwoods by 4

JEROME Delariarte, who lost amateur honors in the recent Philippine Open after a playoff, fired a seven-under-par 65 yesterday for a surprising 4-stroke lead at the start of the CAP-Legends Classic.

The 22-year-old Delariarte became the first amateur to lead the Tour, banging home seven birdies to miss the five-year-old Legends course record by a stroke.

It was the best round ever by Delariarte, the son of an Indonesia-based Andersen Consulting executive.

Elmer Salvador was next with a 69 in the P700,000 fifth leg of the Philippine Golf Tour.

Salvador, the former national amateur champion still seeking his first victory, was a stroke up on Edgar Ababa, Lito Rempojo, Mario Manubay and Angelo Que, the man who nosed out Delariarte at Wack Wack for the Open's low amateur honors.

Philippine Open champion Cassius Casas, Gerald Rosales and Danny Zarate had 71s.

"I feel relaxed all day because I'm playing my home course," said Delariarte.

Aside from main sponsor College Assurance Plan, the event also has Ericsson, Smart, Wilson, Manila the Southwoods Manor, Callaway and Publicist Spark as donors.

The course record of 64 at Legends was set by Swede Daniel Olsson on Nov. 15, 1996 during the second round of the World amateurs.

Scores:

65—J. Delariarte; 69—E. Salvador; 70—E. Ababa, M. Manubay, L. Rempojo, A. Que; 71—F. Casas, F. Fernando, G. Rosales, J. Toribio, D. Zarate; 72—D. Cruz, B. Magada, R. Minoza, E. Sanchez; 73—V. Santia, D. Fortusa, R. Ardimer, A. Balan, R. Cuello, A. Eso, R. Pactolerin, M. Pucay, C. La'O.

DELARIARTE

Barring an upset, Beijing is 2008 Olympics host

MOSCOW—Politics, sentiment and geography all point in the same direction: Barring an upset, the Olympics will be heading to China for the first time.

Despite criticism of its human rights record, Beijing remains the city to beat in Friday's vote by the International Olympic Committee on the host city of the 2008 Summer Games.

The other main contenders are Toronto and Paris, with Osaka, Japan, and Istanbul, Turkey, considered out of the running.

"We are very confident," Tu Mingde, secretary general of the Beijing bid, said Wednesday. "I don't want to use the word favorite. We're just concentrating on one target: the gold medal."

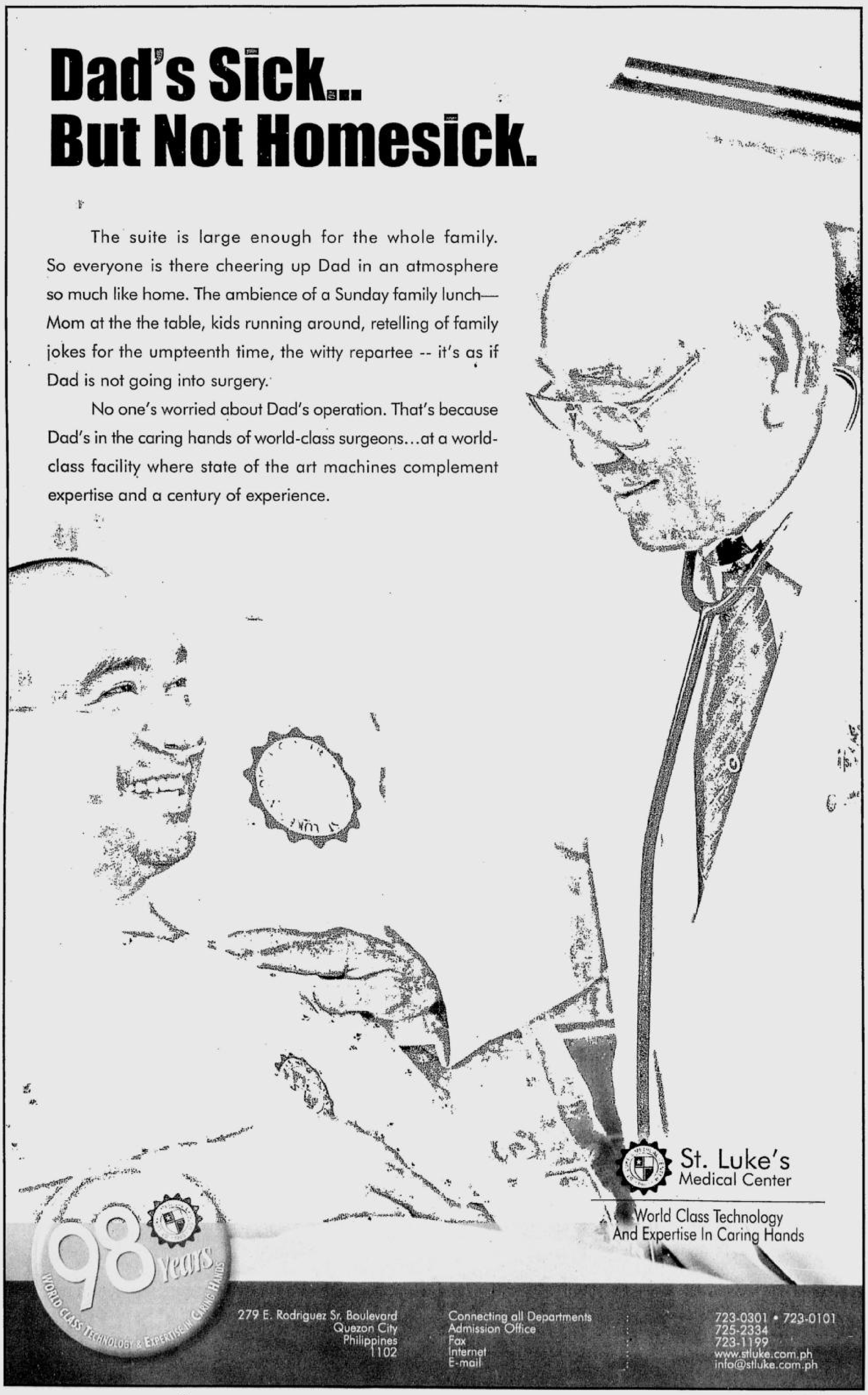
Toronto, with its emphasis on athletes, and Paris, with its romantic allure, cast themselves as technically superior, risk-free choices. Yet many IOC members are captivated by the higher-risk, higher-reward attraction of taking the games to the world's most populous nation.

The IOC likes to see the Olympics as an agent for positive change—and what bigger geopolitical statement than spreading the games to one-fifth of humanity?

"There is a feeling that it would be good for the world and good for China if they win," IOC vice president Kevan Gosper of Australia said in an interview Wednesday. *AP*

CNN broadcast

THE INTERNATIONAL Olympic Committee will announce the winning city today. CNN will provide live updates as well as the IOC decision as it unfolds. CNN's correspondents will also report live from three of the candidate cities—Paris, Beijing and Toronto, on the reactions of these cities. CNN will also broadcast a special edition of Insight hosted by Jonathan Mann, providing a comprehensive look at the Olympics selection. *AP*



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Samaranch's legacy of excesses

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

FORMER Spanish ambassador Juan Antonio Samaranch, whose 21-year term ends during the IOC congress in Moscow on July 13-16, is a veteran politician and fits well in the highly politicized world of the International Olympic Committee.

No wonder he has stayed for more than two decades as president of the IOC, making him by far the longest reigning president of the most powerful sports organization in the world. The only other longest-reigning IOC president was American Avery Brundage who served from 1952 to 1972.

Cool and cunning, the 81-year-old Samaranch is the product of a tumultuous era, marked last year by the Salt Lake City scandal, the most outrageous case of bidding bribery in the history of the Olympics. Still, Samaranch was not punished for this blatant botch for the simple reason that he can not be impeached because the members of the IOC are his appointees and therefore beholden to him. That is why he was able to stay long as president of the Olympic body. Samaranch also succeeded in convincing the members to amend the IOC rules on age eligibility limit, extending it from 72 years old to 80 and making him eligible to serve a fourth and final term. He is also the most traveled Olympic president, flying from one IOC member-country to another in style, all at IOC expense!

To illustrate this penchant for extravagance, Samaranch's entourage flies first class, is met by limousines escorted by motorcycle cops and billeted at the most luxurious hotel during his trips abroad. In his first visit to the Philippines in April 1982, the IOC chief was given the royal treatment, touring the city in an air-conditioned car with a police escort and staying at the posh Manila Hotel.

Not only that, Samaranch's lifestyle of living in an expensive suite for so long at the Palace Hotel in Lausanne where the IOC is based is under attack.

"Living there, reading reports everyday,.isolated, seems to have taken its toll," one senior member was quoted as saying. "He is beginning to lose touch, causing him to be cut off from reality."

Also under fire is the dictatorial nature of his leadership. For example, in the July 16 election to choose his successor, Samaranch has ordered the IOC's ethics committee to ban candidates from conducting meetings to explain their case and limit their trips to visit fellow members to campaign. The IOC boss also banned IOC members from announcing who they are supporting. Yet Samaranch openly endorsed Belgium's Jacques Rogge to replace him, "which," in the words of former Philippine Olympic Committee president Julian Malonso, "is to make sure that his successor will be his ally who will not reopen last year's scandal in the IOC."

Likewise, senior members are angered by Samaranch's other excesses like nominating his son, Juan Antonio Jr., to become an IOC member despite strong objections from some of his colleagues.

SPORTSWATCH

$79-M Bahrain F1 track

MANAMA, Bahrain — Bahrain signed an agreement Wednesday to build a Formula One race track in a move designed to raise the tiny Gulf state's profile. The head of the state's General Organization for Youth and Sports, Sheik Fawaz bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, said the track would cost $79 million. "We have conducted major feasibility studies for this venture and all have proved positive," Sheik Fawaz said, adding that tenders for the construction would be invited in the near future. The track will be built in Sakhir, some 30 kilometers (19 miles) southwest of the capital, Manama, and is expected to be completed by mid 2003, he said. *AP*

Shell chessfest

UP-AND-COMING chessers take the spotlight as the Shell National Youth Active Chess Championship 2001 starts tomorrow in Bacolod City's Don Alfredo Montelibano Community Center. Co-sponsored by PLDT, Negros Navigation Co, Solid Shipping Corp and Shell Citibank Mastercard, the tournament will also be played in Cebu, Davao, Cagayan de Oro , Agoo, La Union, Dasmariñas, Cavite, Batangas City and the NCR. The grand finals is set for Nov. 9-11 in Manila.

MCC registration

REGISTRATION for the MCC 2050 below active chess tournament is now being accepted at the 2/F Center Mall, Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan and at the MCC Parañaque office located at Gatchalian Subd., Sucat with tel. 826-8560. The tournament will be held on July 22 from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Up for grabs is a total pot of P10,000, with the champion pocketing P3,000.

Lingayo billfish champ

BERT Lingayo, a Land Registration Authority official, won the recent Standard Insurance Billfishing Tournament over Rey Buencamino, Philippine Game Fishing Foundation president. Buencamino hooked the Heavy Tackle Angler of the Year (AOY) title and retained overall lead in the 12-leg AOY series. Two-time AOY Lingayo won with two tagged and released sailfish.

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Race 3—1. Letshaveaparty 2. Venus 3. Foreign Exchange 4. Piker's Glory
Race 4—1. Flash Back 2. King Cobra 3. Hot Number 4. Dominant Dancer 5. Septembermorn
Race 5—1. American Beauty 2. Knows Love 3. Early Warning 4. Wag Ingay
Race 6—1. Friends 2. Alleviator 3. Aringkingking 4. Baby Love
Race 7—1. Red Thunder 2. Galvalume 3. Exceptional 4. Snowy Market 5. Kentucky Gold
Race 8—1. Above All/Top Secret 2. Ocean Friend 3. Southern Skies 4. Come In Glory 5. Togsi's Ambition

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SPORTS

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SMB, Tanduay seek vital wins

VALHANDUMON

NCAA ACTION

Ariel Capus (left) of Jose Rizal University tries to score with an undergoal stab against Mapua's Steve Marucut in the NCAA basketball tournament yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. JRU won, 62-56. In the other seniors game, San Sebastian College beat University of Perpetual Help Rizal, 89-81, in double overtime.

STANDINGS	W	L
San Miguel	6	2
Red Bull	5	2
Purefoods	5	3
Ginebra	4	4
Alaska	4	4
Sta. Lucia	4	4
Mobiline	3	4
Pop Cola	3	5
Tanduay	3	5
Shell	2	6

GAMES TODAY *(Philsports)*
5:15 p.m.—Pop Cola vs San Miguel
7:30 p.m.—Tanduay vs Red Bull

By June Navarro

SAN Miguel Beer aims to seal the top quarterfinal slot against Pop Cola today even as Tanduay tries to sustain its drive to the next round in the PBA Commissioners Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Assuring themselves of a twice-to-beat incentive the other night, the Beermen tackle the Panthers and hope for another victory that will give them the No.1 spot entering the quarterfinals.

San Miguel clobbered Barangay Ginebra, 101-92, Wednesday night paving the way for the Beermen to wrest the lead with a 6-2 record.

Pop Cola is fielding in a new import in Jamie Watson, who replaced Jason Sasser in the Panthers' desperation to make the next round. Listed as 6-foot-7, Watson played for the Utah Jazz and was third placer during the 1995 NBA Slam Dunk contest.

The one-sided affair, which saw playmaker Olsen Racela score 30 points, also allowed the Beermen to break loose from a three-way logjam with Red Bull and Purefoods at the top.

Tanduay snapped Purefoods' five-game winning streak with an 83-77 reversal, striking fear on the hearts of the Thunder, their next possible victim in the nightcap at 7:30.

In dire need of a victory, the Rhummasters should pray that the Beermen run over the Panthers and hope luck would be on their side tonight to close in on the possibility of playing in the next round.

Davis, Raptors OK $60-M plus deal

TORONTO — Antonio Davis and the Toronto Raptors have agreed to a five-year deal worth more than $ 60 million, the player's agent said.

The agreement, which cannot be signed until July 18, allows the team to hang on to a coveted free agent after a string of high-profile defections. It also should help the Raptors re-sign superstar Vince Carter, who will be a free agent after next season, agent Bill Duffy said.

"It came down to Toronto putting it all together," Davis told the Toronto Sun from his home in Orlando, Florida. "All I can do is hope that in the long run I've made the best decision for my family.

"Right now I feel that I have." *AP*

RP team replaced

THE ASIAN Basketball Confederation tapped Singapore to replace the Philippines in Group B of the 21st ABC Championships after the latter was suspended by Fiba due to the "messy and unsettled leadership squabble that has hounded the Basketball Association of the Philippines since last year." The event will be held July 20-28 in Shanghai, China.

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Negros, Laguna meet anew

STANDINGS	W	L		W	L
Andok's San Juan	7	3	FedEx Laguna	3	4
Cebuana Lhuillier	7	3	Nueva Ecija	2	5
Negros	7	3	Davao	2	7
LBC Batangas	4	2	Socsargen	2	7

GAMES TODAY *Tinga Gym (Taguig)*
3:00 p.m.—Batangas vs Socsargen
USLS Gym (Bacolod)
5:30 p.m.—Laguna vs Negros

By Roy Luarca

IF the Negros Slashers can beat the FedEx Laguna Lakers on the road, why not at home.

Negros coach Robert Sison is sure to expound on this fact when the Slashers and the Lakers clash anew in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase at the University of St. La Salle Gym in Bacolod City.

The Slashers conquered the Lakers, 103-03, right in Sta. Cruz, Laguna, on July 1 and Negrenses are sure to shout themselves hoarse if only to goad their team to do a repeat.

They have good reasons to do so as a repeat by the Slashers would give them a pacesetting eight-win, 3-loss record, not to mention a sure spot in the next round featuring the top five teams after the double-round eliminations.

Both the Slashers and the Lakers are smarting from defeats in their last games, the Slashers yielding to the Andok's San Juan Knights (84-81) and the Lakers bowing to the Gems (116-104).

The Slashers are known to play with more intensity and perform at a higher lever at their homecourt, however, posing some concern for the Lakers, who have slid to the lower rung at 3-4.

Though the Lakers enjoy the edge in height and heft through 6-foot-8 Jeffrey Flowers, 6-7 Val Domingo, 6-5 Randy Lopez and 6-5 Chris Nicdao, the Slashers also have board crashers in 6-4 John Ferriols, 6-4Reynel Hugnatan, 6-4 Cid White and 6-3 Leo Batog.

Cebu hosts 3 on 3 tourney

UNIVERSITY of Visayas defends its Cebu crown when the third leg of the Nike 3 on 3 basketball championship is held at the Cebu Coliseum tomorrow.

Two former leg champions were ousted in the first two legs of the event. St. Louis Philex dethroned St. Louis Laboratory High School in Baguio while Colegio de San Agustin ended the hopes of last year's winner Tay Tung High School in Bacolod, twin developments that underscored the balanced competition this year.

The Cebu contest will be no exception. Out to unseat UV are University of Cebu, Cebu Eastern College, University of Southern Philippines, Japer Memorial School, St. Louis School-Mandaue, Indiana Aerspace University Lapu-Lapu, First High School for the Hearing Impaired, Southwestern University, Don Sergio Osmeña Sr. National High School, University of the Visayas-Main, Salazar Institute of Technology; Immaculate Heart of Mary, University of the Visayas-Mandaue, St. Alphonsus Catholic School-Lapu-Lapu, Basak National High School, University of San Carlos, University of San Jose Recoletos and Cebu Institute of Technology.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: LPGA Jamie Farr Kroger Classic, Final Round at 7 a.m. (r) on ESPN

PGA Advil Western Open Highlights at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Inside the PGA Tour at 12 noon (r – 7:30 p.m.) on Star Sports

PGA Greater Milwaukee Open, First Round at 10 p.m. on Star Sports

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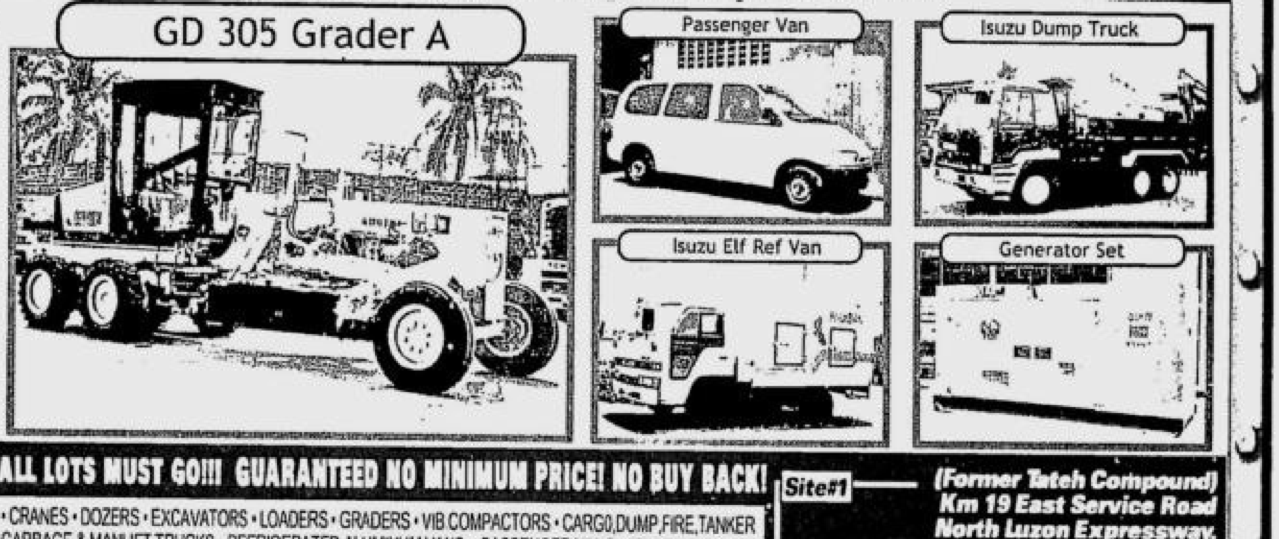

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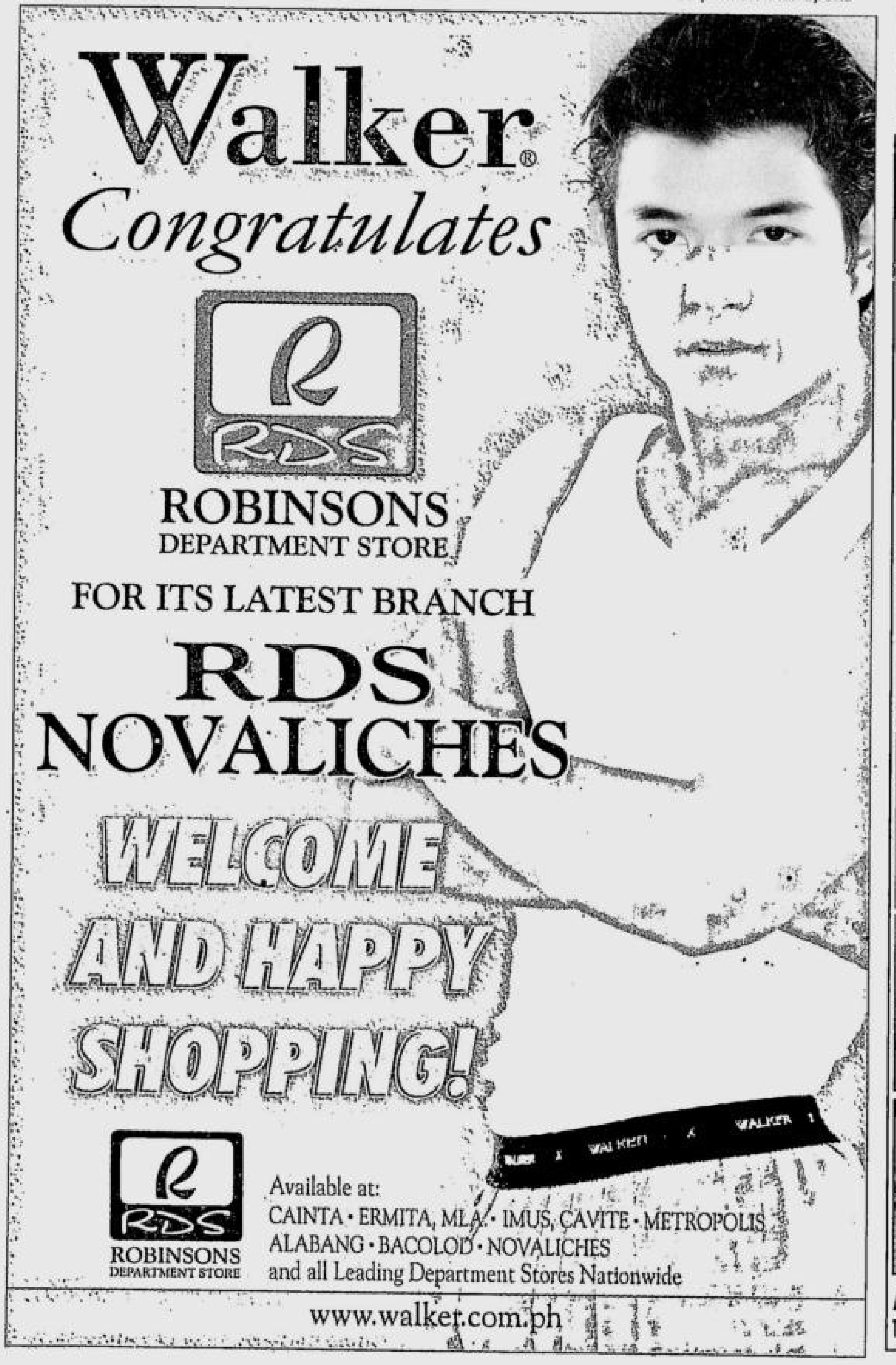

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Pistol-packing priest gets snatchers A26

METRO

Louie C. Camino, Editor

Mom who poisoned 2 kids in Jollibee suicide attempt faces parricide raps

By Nelson F. Flores

THE MOTHER who tried to commit suicide and kill her three sons inside a hamburger chain last week in Makati City is now facing charges of two counts of parricide following the death of two of the boys.

Makati police yesterday said that parricide charges would be filed against Rosalina Sabala, 30, of Marikina City, following the death of her sons Raul III, 6, and Ramon Roberto, 10, from apparent food poisoning.

Sabala and her other son, Richard, 8, are both in stable condition at the Medical City in Mandaluyong where they have been transferred for treatment after Sabala's failed suicide.

Police records showed that Sabala and her three sons ordered combo meals of spaghetti and hamburger at the Jollibee branch in Rockwell Mall in Makati City on July 5.

Witnesses told police that after mother and sons started eating, the youngest boy collapsed, but Sabala ignored him and continued to send a text message on her cell phone. Witnesses said that a few minutes later, Sabala and her two other sons also collapsed.

Members of the Rockwell security staff and Jollibee personnel rushed the Sabalas to a clinic and then to the Ospital Ng Makati.

Doctors found the four to be suffering from symptoms of poisoning like vomiting, headaches and dizziness.

Police records showed that Raul III died several hours after reaching the hospital.

The Sabalas were later transferred to Medical City in Mandaluyong City. But last Saturday, Ramon Roberto also died at the hospital, police said.

Yesterday, PO2 Juvenal Barbossa, Makati City police homicide investigator, said Sabala could again try to kill herself to evade responsibility for the death of her two sons.

Results of the analysis of the

MOM WHO/ A26

60 injured in Malabon demolition

By Christian V. Esguerra

ABOUT 60 people, including 10 policemen, were yesterday injured during a violent demolition of squatter shanties in Malabon.

Chief Insp. Pablo Aquino Jr., head of the police team that secured the area, said he and at least nine of his men were hurt after residents attacked them.

But squatters living under tents near Letre Road said police sparked the violence and beat up about 50 people, including women and children.

The violent clash happened about 10 a.m. after Malabon police and a private demolition team arrived at Paradise Village on Letre Road.

Aquino said the demolition of

60 INJURED/ A26

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Pistol-packing priest gets snatchers

By Alcuin Papa

A PISTOL-PACKING Parañaque parish priest yesterday showed a father and son team of cell phone snatchers the wrath of a man of God.

Fr. Rico Nobleza, 32, of the Sta. Rita Parish in Parañaque City, was on board a jeepney going to Baclaran when two men also boarded the jeepney at around 5 a.m. yesterday.

One of the men, later identified as Manuel Samson, 49, of 119 F. Progreso St., Parañaque, sat beside the priest in the front seats. Samson's son, Christian, 19, sat in the back.

Police learned that Manuel poked a knife at Nobleza and asked for his cell phone.

"I told him, 'Wait a minute, child, I shall get it from my waist,'" Nobleza told police.

However, instead of getting his cell phone, the priest pulled out a .45 caliber pistol and told the Samsons to surrender.

Seeing the pistol, father and son jumped out of the jeepney and ran.

But Nobleza, together with the other male passengers, chased the Samsons and eventually cornered them. The passengers brought them to the nearest police station.

At the police station, Manuel and Christian begged the priest not to file charges against them.

The priest refused and said only God could forgive them for what they had done.

"They should rot in jail for the things they have done," the priest boomed.

Malonzo cleared of graft charges

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE SANDIGANBAYAN has dismissed the graft case against Caloocan officer in charge Reynaldo Malonzo and other former local officials in connection with the release of P5.9 million as bank payment for the construction of a public market.

The graft case was filed by former Mayor Macario "Boy" Asistio Jr.

The Ombudsman earlier found no probable cause to charge Malonzo and other local officials with graft.

The case stemmed from the contested P5.9-million portion of Caloocan's P22.814-million loan from the Philippine National Bank for the construction of the Maypajo public market in 1983. Asistio was mayor at that time.

Four years later, the PNB debited the loaned amount of P5,089,117 from the city's account and released it directly to project contractor Ruflex Development and Construction Co. after the city failed to pay its outstanding annual amortization.

The local government sued the bank. But both parties agreed to amicably settle the issue.

The city council passed an ordinance authorizing the city government to release P5.9 million to pay its PNB loan. The loan had already ballooned to about P37 million in interest and other charges.

Asistio argued that the ordinance was illegal since it did not pass through the city treasurer and auditor.

The Sandiganbayan ruled that the ordinance was made in "good faith with the primary purpose of saving public funds for the city."

Rob suspects nabbed trying to get wounded cohort out of hospital

By Jerome Aning

POLICE yesterday caught three suspected holdup men who dared to go to a hospital to get a companion who was shot during a heist in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Gerry Cruz, 19, single and a resident of 3665 Pilar St., Tondo, was shot in the right side of the torso by SPO1 Elmer Mauricio of the Western Police District Station 3 who happened to be on board the jeepney during the holdup.

The other suspects, Exequiel Pragasa, 18, of Block 34, Lot 19, Phase 2, Area 1, Kaunlaran Village, Navotas; Nelson Sipagan, 18, of 220 Carnation St., North Bay Boulevard, Navotas; and Victor Garagasin, 21, of 1306 Solis St., Tondo, were arrested when they tried to have Cruz discharged from the emergency room of the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center (JRMMC), also in Sta. Cruz.

Station 3 commander Supt. Danilo Abarsoza said the four men held up about 15 passengers of a jeepney at the corner of Tomas Mapua and Yuseco streets around 11:45 p.m. Wednesday.

According to SPO1 Mauricio, who was seated at the far end in the back of the jeepney, two of the four men drew out fan knives and threatened to stab anyone who would resist, while the two other men took the wallets, cell phones and jewelry of the passengers.

When the four men got off the jeepney, SPO1 Mauricio ran after them. He said he introduced himself as a policeman, told them to stop and surrender, and even fired a warning shot.

But two of the suspects turned around and tried to attack him, he said. He fired at the suspects, hitting Cruz. The other suspects were able to escape, leaving behind a fan knife and a cell phone.

SPO1 Mauricio, assisted by two passengers of a passing tricycle, brought the wounded suspect to the JRMMC. The policeman, accompanied by two of the holdup victims, later went to Station 3 headquarters to report the holdup.

SPO1 Mauricio was recounting the incident to investigator PO1 Ireneo Sosas Jr. when the security office of the JRMMC called Station 3 and reported that three men were trying to force their way into the emergency room to "claim" Cruz.

The two policemen drove to the hospital, where SPO1 Mauricio recognized the three men as among the holdup men.

Pragasa, Sipagan and Garagasin were arrested and brought to Station 3, where they were positively identified by victims Rey Jonathan Pascual and Larry Dumlao.

QC prisoner makes like the 'Hulk'

By Philip C. Tubeza

JOSEPH Ancheta's fellow detainees at the Quezon City Jail have a good reason to fear him. Before dawn yesterday, Ancheta went amuck, like TV's "Incredible Hulk" broke his handcuffs with his bare hands and them jumped from the prison stairs.

He landed on the ground head first but survived, police said.

Now, prison officials want Ancheta, 47, to be moved to the National Institute for Mental Health, said Supt. Primitivo Benitez, the Quezon City jail warden.

Ancheta, who is in prison for robbery and physical injuries, was confined at the mental institute before he was transferred to the city jail in February, Benitez said.

He said that Wednesday night, Ancheta began acting strangely, talking to himself and then becoming more aggressive than usual toward the other inmates.

Benitez said his men had to handcuff Ancheta and separate him from the other detainees, but the deranged man's behavior even got worse.

At 3:20 a.m. yesterday, Ancheta, who is 5-foot-5 and heavily built, broke his handcuffs, Benitez said.

Ancheta then climbed the stairs in the prison annex building and then jumped, landing on the ground head first, Benitez said.

But all Ancheta got was a head bruise, he added.

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How do PBA fans part with a masterpiece?

Bare Eye

Recah Trinidad

NICE to know that some good things really last.

Of course, we cannot hope for them to last forever.

Yes, we do mourn the passing of people, even fleeting friendships, because they made us feel nice and cozy down here.

And we pray that, if anybody special indeed had to walk into the sunset, he should get the deserved send-off. We don't just let him vanish into thin air. We try and offer a warm, fond farewell.

But, then, what if it's one fabulous basketball team that would leave the scene?

The ready feeling is that of gloom. Not unlike what countless fans felt when we lost both Crispa and Toyota in the PBA.

Or much, much earlier, when Yco and Ysmael disbanded one after the other in the Micaa league.

You see, if these four teams were works of art, they could've been readily rated as masterpieces.

These great teams, for sure, did not emerge or happen overnight but were, in fact, products of patient plodding and monumental buildups.

* * *

It took time before they grew into legends whose names and shining feats would be etched in the minds of faded but faithful followers.

I first learned to enjoy and admire basketball following the exploits of Don Manolo Elizalde's Yco Painters who played and ruled at the old Rizal Memorial Coliseum on Vito Cruz like it was their own.

Yco chieftain Carlos Loyzaga was, in truth, King Caloy of the national hardcourt, a mighty, graceful and regal native son who was ready and able to face up to foreign invaders of all shapes and sizes.

After the Loyzaga reign came the Jaworski era, which budded at Meralco, peaked at Toyota, then smoldered before finally fizzling out at Ginebra.

You see, there's actually one debate on whether or not both Toyota and Ginebra would have developed strong tribal following here if not for the solid, persuasive leadership of Jaworski in both squads.

This same question is now also being asked in the case of Purefoods.

There are those who believe and swear that the Purefoods franchise was solidly anchored on Alvin Patrimonio, more popularly dubbed as The Captain.

For one thing, Patrimonio diehards contend, after all his contemporaries and fellow mainstays, like Jerry Codiñera and Jojo Lastimosa, have bolted Purefoods, that team's popularity remained strong because The Captain has remained steadfast.

The Purefoods team, with Patrimonio as beacon, continues to be among the top-drawing lineups in the Philippine Basketball Association.

In short, Purefoods, by its monumental merits, could also be ranked as a national masterpiece, together with Yco, Ysmael Steel, Crispa and Toyota.

* * *

Unfortunately, just like these four legendary squads, Purefoods, which has also become synonymous with classy hotdogs, appears headed for the sunset.

At first, it was thought that the peril of Purefoods leaving the PBA was all cheap rumor. But lately, the danger of the team's untimely exit has been ringing more distinctly.

Expectedly, hordes and hordes of team followers have been alarmed.

Several sportswriters with whom I had a round of drinks and exquisite *pulutan* at Dinky's, right across the Pasig venue of the PBA, claimed the absence of Purefoods would be one jarring blow to the pro league itself.

That's one contention that even Purefoods team rivals cannot contest.

For one, we were re-informed on Wednesday that Purefoods, which entered the PBA as "the team of the future in 1988," more than fulfilled that promise. It has won a total of five titles in 16 finals appearances.

Add to that the fact that Alvin Patrimonio owns a record-equaling four MVP Awards ('91, '93, '94, '97) and also continues to be regarded as Mr. Wholesome in the local pro circuit.

Oh, there are a lot of nice things fans will continue to say about Purefoods.

But if the Purefoods team indeed had to go, it could be expected to exit with a bang.

It won't be as simple as saying goodbye to a dying hotdog.

One great team that helped make a lot of people feel nice and cozy deserves a dignified send-off.

Of course, nothing could be better than having the squad stay indefinitely. That would make for a very happy ending.

'Balik-Tanaw 2001' at PLM

THE PAMANTASAN ng Lungsod ng Maynila Scholar's Foundation Inc. will hold a weeklong alumni get-together and fellowship from July 13 to 17.

Called "Balik-Tanaw 2001," the event will be a daily gathering of alumni in various activities and in different venues.

PLM alumni from Australia, Canada and the United States and their families have organized themselves to join the grand reunion.

All interested alumni may get their tickets at the PLMSFI secretariat at Alas Group, Jaka Bldg., 6780 Ayala Ave., Makati, or call 750-4930.

For more details, e-mail alasgrup@mindgate.net.

60 injured in Malabon . . .

(From page A25)

several houses at the Gozon compound inside the village was backed by a court order.

He said the property is privately owned and squatters had long been told to leave.

He said the demolition team was not after the people living under the tents in front of the village.

But hundreds of squatters there confronted policemen, fearing that their tents were about to be demolished.

Last Tuesday, the local government had partially destroyed the squatters' makeshift houses to clear the road in front of Paradise Village.

Aquino claimed that Jess del Prado of the League of Urban Poor for Action agitated the squatter neighborhood by shouting, "*Demolisyon, tutulan, labanan* (Down with demotion, fight demolition)!"

Several residents then allegedly threw rocks at policemen and members of the demolition team, Aquino said.

Aquino, who also suffered several injuries, said about 10 women took turns in beating him up.

Police arrested Del Prado, Nenita Reli, 39, Lilia de la Cruz, 40, and Clara Bachicha, 42.

Del Prado said Aquino grabbed him by the hair, prompting other residents to come to his rescue.

But after about 20 minutes of clashes, the demolition team managed to proceed to the Gozon compound and "peacefully" demolished the shanties, Aquino said.

Squatters who figured in the clash were former residents of Paradise Village. They said they were forced to live in tents in front of the village after a mysterious fire razed their houses in April.

They said they believe their houses were deliberately burned to force them to leave.

Mom who poisoned . . .

(From page A25)

contents of the stomachs of the victims have yet to be released, delaying the filing of charges against Sabala, Barbossa said.

He said police need confirmation that the victims died of poisoning before the charges could be filed.

Barbossa also said that relatives of the Sabalas had not allowed police to interview the mother, making the investigation difficult.

But police had gathered enough evidence for a case to stand, Barbossa said. A suicide note written on the back of one of the wedding pictures of the Sabala couple was found in Sabala's possession, Barbossa said.

The note said Sabala would also kill her children if she killed herself, Barbossa said.

Sabala's suicide attempt appeared to have been triggered by her quarrels with her husband whom she accused of womanizing, police said.

Barbossa said Sabala chose to commit suicide at the Jollibee branch because they often went there as a family and it was near her husband's office so it would make her husband feel very guilty.

The husband is said to be a chef of a restaurant also in Rockwell.

Natalia Oreireo charmed by Pinoys and jeepneys

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

NOT SINCE **Thalia**, the Mexican telenovela star who captured the hearts of Filipino viewers, has a Spanish-speaking heroine been adored on local TV.

Natalia Oreiro the Latin bombshell is expected to duplicate the success of Thalia's "Marimar" with the newest telenovela, "Monica Brava."

Natalia came to Manila last week to promote "Monica Brava," which airs at 8 p.m. nightly on GMA 7. The telenovela is now being viewed in 23 countries, including the United States, Russia and all of Latin America.

Natalia first made a name for herself in Argentina, where "Monica Brava" became the highest rated TV program. From her birthplace in Uruguay, she moved to Argentina where, at 17, she started her singing and acting career.

"My mom was a hairdresser and whenever I was in her parlor, I would get a brush which I would use as a microphone and sing in front of a big mirror," Natalia recalls.

The 24-year-old beauty took her flair for singing after her mom, whom she says has a very good singing voice. "But she doesn't sing professionally," she says. "I got my passion for music from my great grandfather, who was part of an orchestra. Uruguay is also a very musical country, so that also accounts for my talent."

At 8, Natalia started taking acting classes. When she was 12, she was cast in a commercial. It paved the way for more than 30 other commercials for major products.

At 14, she bested more than 10,000 hopefuls to tour with Brazilian TV and music star Xuxa. She also performed for the latter's TV show.

When she moved to Argentina, Natalia landed a role on the soap opera, "Inconquistable Corazon." She also became a VJ for MTV America Latino.

Commercial success came when Natalia snagged the lead role as Valeria in the soap opera "Ricos y Famosos."

Not too long after, she conquered the big screen in her first movie, "Un Argentino en Nueva York (An Argentine in New York)," where she played a young woman who dreams of becoming a singing star. The film premiered in Buenos Aires the same weekend "Titanic" hit local theaters, and Natalia's movie gave the Hollywood blockbuster a run for its money.

Natalia is also a recording artist. Her debut album, which contains the theme of "Monica Brava," was certified triple platinum.

In January 2000, she was named "Celebrity of the Year" by E! Entertainment TV Latino. Also last year, she recorded her second album, "Tu Veneno,"

Which she promoted in Greece, Slovenia, Hungary, Turkey and Israel.

Natalia's album is distributed locally by BMG Records (Pilipinas).

Of the many places she has visited, Natalia is awed by the Kremlin in Russia and the historic sites in Israel. She is fascinated with our jeepneys, which she describes as "small buses." GMA 7 gifted her with a small replica of a jeepney.

"It's my first time to see something like that and it's beautiful," she says of the colorful jeepney.

"But of all the places I've visited, people in the Philippines are the warmest. Your culture is very similar to my country. I want to come back here, do a concert and go to the beach."

She attributes the global success of telenovelas to the Mexican soap opera series. "The Mexican telenovelas opened the doors for telenovelas in the world. It's not the country that counts but the uniqueness of the star. It's important for a star to be different."

"Monica Brava" is about an orphan raised by nuns in a convent. Due to her passion for football, Monica spent her childhood playing with boys, hence her tomboyish charm.

When she grows up, she works in the DiCarlos manor where she meets Ivo, who will be her love interest.

Asked what she likes doing best, singing or acting, Natalia says, "I am always focused in my career or whatever I'm doing. I love singing and acting. I'm sure I will be doing both for a long time."

PTV 4 now NBN

THE NEW people appointed by Pres. **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** to be at the helm of People's Television or PTV 4, are working toward a major makeover for the government-owned network.

First on the agenda is to change the name of the station, which will formally be known as National Broadcasting Network or NBN.

The network is now under the direction of **Mia A. Concio** as chair and president, with **Joey S. Isabelo** as general manager.

"This decision of the board of directors underscores the network's desire to rehabilitate itself, primarily its image and play a more substantial role in the local broadcast industry," Concio points out.

This is the third major makeover for Channel 4, in its 30-year existence. The station was initially known as GTV 4 when it opened in 1974. Then it was renamed Maharlika Broadcasting Network in 1980.

In March 1992, former Pres. Cory Aquino signed a Republic Act and turned the station into a government corporation known as People's Television Network.

According to Concio, Channel 4 has been operating on its own revenues since 1992. The network has been on full satellite transmission nationwide since then, with 40-kilowatt transmitter on a 500-foot tower.

Isabelo, meanwhile, adds that Channel 4 has 27 provincial stations and is affiliated with over 800 cable system across the country, translating its reach to 92 percent of the viewing public nationwide.

Yet, even if Channel 4 has maintained a low profile all these years, its present board of directors believes the network has the capabilities to be a major player in the industry.

Isabelo informs Channel 4 was the first station to acquire digital technology and convert satellite transmission to digital compression.

"Our provincial stations use solid-state transmitters, with powers ranging from 1 KW to 10 KW. And we were the first to simultaneously transmit programs to provincial stations and independent cable systems."

NBN is set to make its mark as it launches "Tele-Diyaryo," a two-hour primetime news program which will give emphasis to the network's major thrust—news. It airs Mondays to Fridays, 8 to 10 p.m.

In September, NBN will highlight another major thrust in its programming which is sports, by airing the coverage of the South East Asian Games.

"This time, we intend to take full advantage of our wide reach and strengthen our position with new shows and a more aggressive marketing strategy," Concio says.

OLE! Oreiro wants to "come back and go to the beach." ROGER MARGALLO

CNBC boss graces ceremonial broadcast

GOODFELLOW

NON-CABLE subscribers can now enjoy CNBC Asia's 24-hour up-to-the-minute global market events and top business stories daily, over UHF Channel 11, without paying extra cable costs.

CNBC chief executive officer Scott Goodfellow was in Manila recently for the ceremonial switch-on of CNBC Asia in Channel 11.

"We are very excited over this move," said Goodfellow. "The goal of our business is to try to give ordinary viewers the tools to handle their finances. CNBC provides them with all the information they need. And by being in over-the-air TV in Manila, we can reach ordinary people, hopefully help in improving their lives."

Entertainment Network Limited or Enternet, a Singapore-based TV content provider recently signed a memorandum of agreement with Zoe Broadcasting Network to manage the programming of UHF Channel 11. Before CNBC, Channel 11 was airing 10 hours of inspirational Christian programming.

With Enternet at the helm, Channel 11 is expected to go through a major change in programming. The presence of CNBC Asia is the initial move to put Channel 11 in line with other commercial channels in Philippine TV.

CNBC Asia has bureaus in Bangkok, New Delhi, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Sydney and Taipei and Tokyo.

The news and information network reaches over 20 million households. Its program schedule is designed to cover the markets when they open at the start of business and throughout the working day.

CNBC airs its live overnight US programming and stays with Wall Street till the Asian markets open the new day.

The network provides current financial data in ticker tape and the index box. The ticker tape, the long narrow strip at the bottom of the TV screen provides the stock data, while the index box offers a quick display on how Asian markets are performing throughout the trading day. It also has a regional ticker which shows the day's most active stocks in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Bangkok, Jakarta, Sydney and Wellington.

INTERACTIVE TV TECHNOLOGY

Oscar Halaguena (second from left), vice president for marketing of Philippine Multi-Media System Inc. (PMSI), shakes hands with OpenTV Asia Pacific managing director Jeffrey Brown, after they signed an agreement for the latter to provide interactive TV technology for PMSI and Dream Broadcasting System's Direct-To-Home (DTH) satellite TV service. Also in photo are PMSI dealer sales development head Butch Reyes (elft), OpenTV Asia Pacific production marketing manager Gialei Wu (center) and PMSI assistant brand manager Jun Manas.

Being friends with a former rival

(From page A32)

we were just having a long awaited meal together.

For her effort, I was touched. Ms D was able to set aside the fact that my shoot was for a rival network.

Last Monday, together with **Zsa Zsa Padilla**, one of my best friends, and our buddy **Keren Pascual**, Dina and I watched NBC's premiere of "Along Came a Spider" at Glorietta 4. We felt like the cast of "Sex and the City" when we had a late dinner afterward at Azzuro.

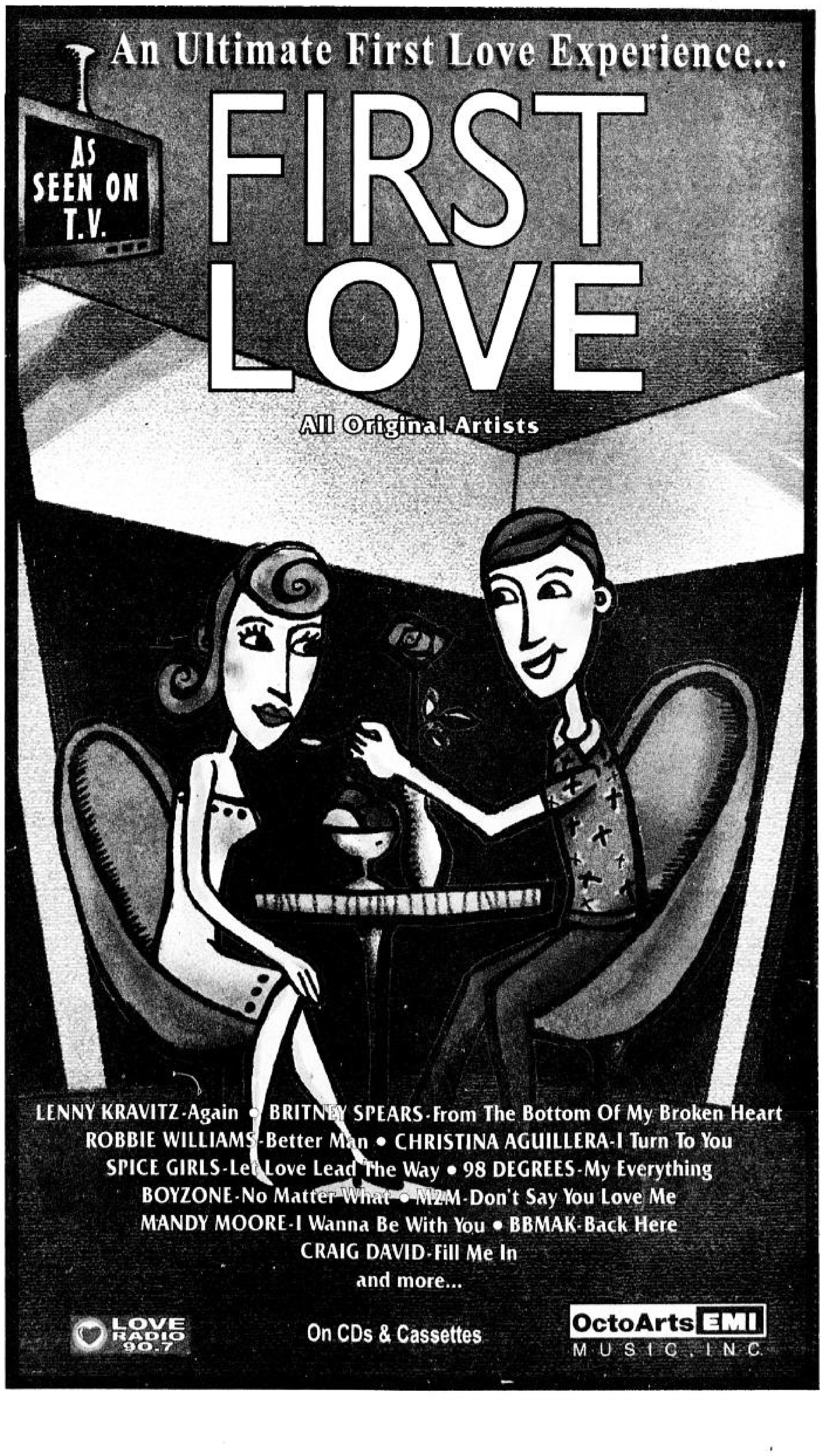
Being mature

We had so much fun critiquing the film, and sharing tidbits about our personal and professional lives. In that group, only Zsa Zsa is happily settled; the rest of us are still in limbo.

I am so grateful to Zsa Zsa's supporting me in getting to know Dina. In turn, we both saw that Dina was sincere in her desire to bond with us when she even joined us in our weekly novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in Baclaran.

What's next? Who knows? Life's too short to not grab the chance to have one less enemy. Life's too exciting to not explore the possibility of sharing a true friendship, especially with someone you once considered a worthy rival.

After all, having her opposite me in the morning inspired me to be a better host. Having her beside me now might really make me a better person. Just by reaching out to each other, I'd like to think that we've both already exhibited a commendable amount of maturity.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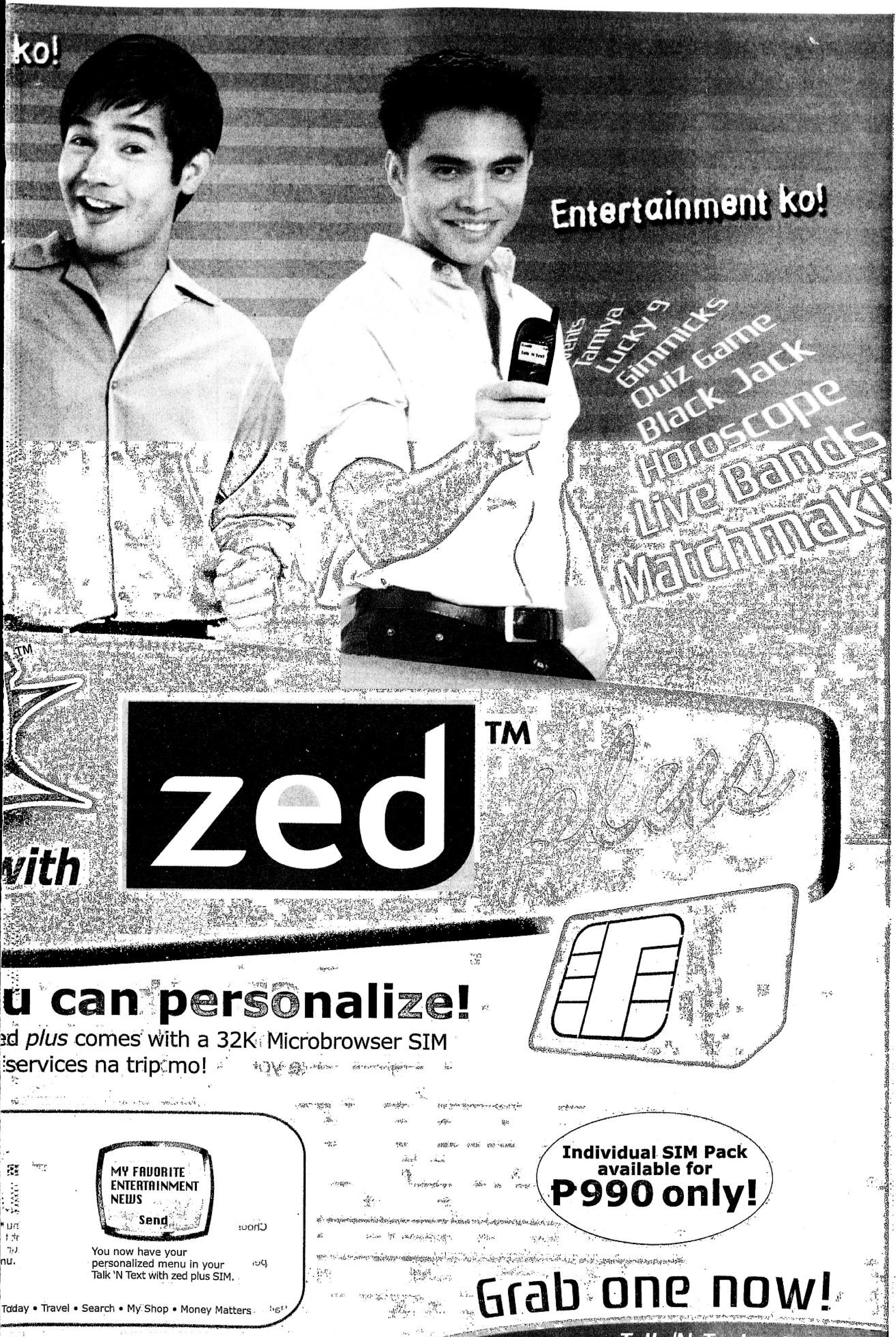
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EASTERN	
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ODEON-2	ALONG CAME SPIDER
ROBEN	AMORSEKO
TANDEM-1	ONE NIGHT AT MC COOL'S
TANDEM-2	PANINDA
TIMES	15 MIUTES / ATTACK FORCE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	AMORSEKO
QUEZON-1	AMORSEKO
REMAR	AMORSEKO
REMAR-2	PANINDA
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	DR. DOOLITTLE 2
CINEMA-2	FINAL FANTASY
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MILA
CINEMA-2	ACCIDENTAL SPY
CINEMA-3	AMORSEKO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
CINEMA-6	ONSEHAN
CINEMA-7	PANINDA
CINEMA-8	ATLANTIS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	DR. DOOLITTLE 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DRIVEN
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	FINAL FANTASY
CINEMA-12	ALONG CAME SPIDER
CINEMA-14	SWORDFISH
CINEMA-15	PANGAKO. IKAW LANG
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	ALONG CAME A SPIDER
CINEMA-2	ATLANTIS
CINEMA-3	DR. DOLITTLE 2
CINEMA-4	FINAL FANTASY
CINEMA-5	DRIVEN
CINEMA-6	SWORD FISH
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	SPOT
CINEMA-2	COLLEGE GIRL
CINEMA-4	MULATA
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	TOO MUCH FLESH
CINEMA-2	VALENTINE
CINEMA-4	UHAW NA HAYOP

MTV airs new US shows

MTV's "Cribs," one of the leading MTV programs in the United States, finally arrives in the Philippines.

Take a peek into your favorite celebrity's sanctuary where they catch up on some rest and relaxation, in the place they like to call home.

On MTV's "Cribs," the artists themselves serve as tour-guides and show viewers where they work, play, eat, sleep and live.

Catch glimpses of the homes of Ozzy Osbourne, Joey McIn-tyre, Sugar Ray, Outkast, Destiny's Child, Snoop Dogg, Robbie Williams, Tommy Lee and other stars as they take you on a behind-the-scenes tour of their private abode.

MTV's "Cribs" airs on MTV Philippines non-cable TV Channel 41 on Mondays, 8 p.m., with repeats on Wednesdays at 1 p.m., Thursdays at 2 p.m. and Saturdays at 8 a.m.

Another new show hitting MTV Philippines is "MTV Soundcheck," where the show will present three new music videos, and after viewing each, viewers can vote for their favorite video on www.mtvasia.com, which can lead to your choice of video being added to the MTV playlist.

"MTV Soundcheck" airs on MTV Philippines non-cable TV Channel 41 on Mondays 2 to 2:15 p.m., Tuesdays, 8:30 to 8:45 a.m., Wednesdays, 10 to 10:15 a.m., Thursdays, 9 to 9:15 p.m. and Fridays, 5 to 5:15 p.m.

MTV Philippines is on Channel 41 for free TV or non-cable subscribers, Channel 32 for Sky Cable subscribers and Channel 41 for Home Cable subscribers.

For more information, call the MTV hotline at 882-IMTV, or log onto www.mtvasia.com.

'The Beach' airs on Star Movies

HOLLYWOOD heartthrob Leonardo DiCaprio stars in the action-suspense flick, "The Beach," 9 p.m. on Sunday, July 15 on Star Movies.

The movie also stars French actress Virginie Ledoyen, Robert Carlyle, Tilda Swinton and Guillaume Canet.

Replays on July 20 and 26.

In the movie, DiCaprio plays a young American backpacker who arrives in Thailand with adventure on his mind.

Travel, he asserts, is the search for experience, the quest for something different.

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(PG-13 RT - 1:46)
Fantasy-Action-Science Fiction-Adventure

Starring:
Ming-Na Wen
James Woods
Ving Rhames
Steve Buscemi
Donald Sutherland

July 13 - Friday
6:00 PM - Final Fantasy
8:20 PM - Final Fantasy
10:40 PM - Final Fantasy

UPCOMING MOVIES AT LOUIE'S THX:
JURASIC PARK III
Bridgit Jones Diary
Moulin Rouge

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Video games expanded to feature-film length

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE Film scene is experiencing some major changes this year, and the unnerving and exciting thing about these drastic innovations is that most of them are unexpected.

Leading the field is the sudden popularity of movies based on video games. This was tried some years ago with films like "Wing Commander," "Street Fighter" and "Super Mario Bros.," but they didn't emerge as hits.

This year, however, "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider" broke records on its opening weekend, making a big star of its lead actress, **Angelina Jolie**.

Next to hit the movie screens is another film based on a video game, "Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within." Unlike "Tomb Raider," which was live action, "Final Fantasy" is an animated feature.

Will it do as well at the box office as "Tomb Raider" has? If it does, you can bet that many major Hollywood studios will green-light their own cinematic take-offs on video games.

What "Final Fantasy" has going for it is the popularity of the original Japanese video game. Naturally, people who have played it will be curious about how it's going to be expanded into feature-film length. Of such loyal audiences are hit movies made.

But there are movie veterans who caution producers from jumping onto the video game movie bandwagon just yet. They point to the fact that "Tomb Raider" cost $80 M to make, and "Final Fantasy" has an even bigger price tag: $120M! It'll take a lot of loyal fans to make such an expensive production end up in the black.

Also, the nay-sayers note that video games are popular because they're interactive, whereas their movie versions aren't. Clearly, the film versions have to make up for this loss of hands-on participation with other exciting touches and flourishes.

Some viewers are also turned off by video game movies' tendency to have lightweight plots. Most of their focus is on their visual gimmicks and effects, but these aren't enough for some moviegoers.

This could have accounted for the fact that "Tomb Raider" had a very strong opening *but* enjoyed smaller houses shortly thereafter, possibly resulting from poor word of mouth about its thin plotting.

In any case, "Final Fantasy" is about to open in the States, so in a week or two, we'll know how flash-in-the-pan or truly flashy the new trend for video game films will turn out to be.

Since both video games and the movies are billion-dollar enterprises ($8 billion for the movies, $6 billion for video games), producers hope that a "marriage" of these two blockbuster entertainment industries will be a matter of addition and multiplication, marriage will be made in entertainment heaven—or on the cutting-room floor.

Janet Basco releases new album

OUR everlasting thanks go to singing star **Janet Basco** for refusing to call herself a diva. That kind of humility is so welcome these days, when so many female singers audaciously crown themselves with that title just because they can belt out a high note and scream loud enough to be heard in Cabadbaran, Agusan. Well, hog callers are similarly gifted, but they don't call themselves divas—*o, di va*?

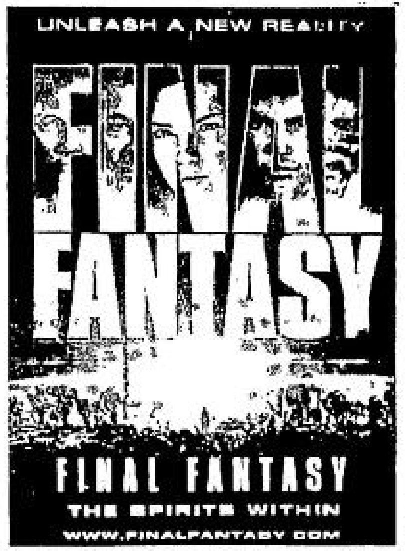
Back to Janet: She's cut her first new record in 17 years and is currently on a mall tour to promote it. Schedule: July 14, SM Southmall; July 15, SM Cebu: July 27, SM North Edsa, and July 29, SM Megamall.

Janet's album, "Love Is Right," Sings about the various stages of falling in and out of love. Its carrier single is titled "Kiss Me Goodbye."

Get yourself a copy of the album, why don't you? Janet's been reaping acclaim as a singer since the early '80s, but she's managed to keep a level head on those pretty shoulders all this time. In the biz, that's quite an unusual achievement.

Since we're in this business, we don't really have to buy albums, but we're getting "Love Is Right" for ourselves because we want to show our appreciation to Janet for not going the way of all flash in the "diva-stating" music biz.

We do have legit divas, but many of them are found in classical music. As for female singers who are unqualified to call themselves divas but do so anyway, *di vale na lang*.



Final Fantasy MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

Eye-popping sci-fi epic adventure

In the year 2065, a meteor crashes Earth, unleashing millions of destructive alien creatures. The beautiful Dr. Aki Ross is the planet's hope to overpower the alien invaders.

Infected with an alien spirit, Aki holds the key to defeating the creatures, as she scours the earth to collect the eight spirits that will save the planet, and pursues her final fantasy.

Share a motion picture unlike anything seen or imagined before on screen. Marvel at the latest in hyper-real CGI (computer generated image) technology.

Don't miss the adventure movie of the year!

3RD MUST-SEE ADVENTURE DAY!

Weekend bar tour

THE MILD Seven models comes full circle as they return to Makati and Malate this payday weekend, joining the throngs of gimmick-seekers.

First stop tonight is Malate. The models have included in their line-up ultra chic and tres popular places like Mint, Pepe and Pilar, Java Hut, Timbuktu, Wave Jazz Rhythms, 617 Nakpil, Episode, Bravo, Nth Degree, 02 Bar, Bedrock and Ten Years After.

Tomorrow night, Saturday, the models will jive with the Makati crowd as they visit such venues as Jazz Rhythms, Strumm's, H20, Hutu's Hut, Cork, Che Cigar, Streetlife, Hardrock Cafe, Cable Car Pasay Road and Glorietta, Padi's Point Pasay Road and Mile Long and Decades in Mile Long.

REPEAT PERFORMANCE

After its successful one-night gig at Virgin Café Tomas Morato on June 22, True Faith will have a repeat performance on Saturday, July 14. The show is part of Virgin Café's ongoing series, "Great Band Nights," featuring top bands in the local music scene.

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

ALONG CAME A SPIDER - P 13 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:20	ATLANTIS - GP 11:15, 1:15, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15	DR. DOLITTLE 2 - GP 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
FINAL FANTASY - P 13 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50	DRIVEN - P 13 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	SWORD FISH - R 18 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00

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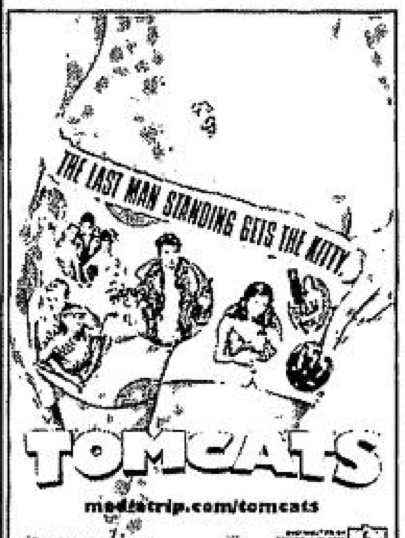


MTRCB ▶ R Strictly for ADULTS

Sexy, wacky comedy opens July 18

Introducing, the "Tomcats," tropa ng free-wheeling, sex-obsessed guys, na walang inatupag kung hindi maka-iskor at magbilang ng nobya.

Nagpustahan ang barkada – sino ang huling barako na di patatali sa pag-aasawa?

Matapos ang ilang taon, sina Michael (Jerry O'Connell ng JERRY MAGUIRE) at Kyle (Jake Busey ng STARSHIP TROOPERS) na lang ang natitirang bachelor sa grupo.

Upang manalo sa pusta, ise-set up ni Mike si Kyle with super-seductive Natalie (Shannon Elizabeth ng SCARY MOVIE, AMERICAN PIE). Nguni't di niya inaasahan na maiinlab din pala siya sa sexing dalaga. Manalo man siya sa pusta, maglalaho naman ang true love niya!

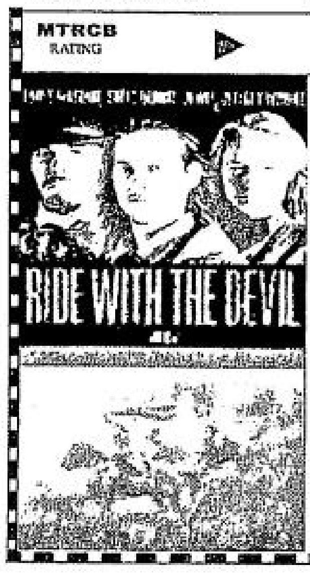
Silipin din sa hilarious sexy comedy from Columbia Pictures sina Playboy playmates Julia Schultz at Amber Smith. Rated R.

Stand-up comedy show

COMEDIAN Allan K holds a stand-up comedy act, "Up Nose . . . Nothing Personal," at 9 tomorrow night, July 14, at Oh Bar (near Delta Theater) in Quezon City.

Special guests are Kiray and Chazz, with backup dancers Joshua Cruz and Jasper Robles.

Ticket prices are P400 and P300. For inquiries, call or text 0917-8904470 or 0917-8984470.



AYALA CINEMAS ARTFILM - GLORIETTA 4 Art Film
OPENS JULY 18 (Wed.)
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

PHILIPPINE PREMIERE
From the Critically Acclaimed Director of "CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON"
RIDE WITH THE DEVIL
A Film by ANG LEE

IN A NO-MAN'S LAND BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH,
YOU DIDN'T FIGHT FOR THE BLUE OR THE GRAY...
YOU FOUGHT FOR YOUR FRIENDS AND YOUR FAMILY.

SKEET ULRICH TOBEY MAGUIRE JEFFREY WRIGHT

Ang Lee ("The Ice Storm," "Sense and Sensibility" & Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon") once again takes audiences on a journey to a different time and place, and into his characters' internal conflicts. A cast of rising young stars portrays young Americans, striving to define themselves and the country they had always called home, amidst national turmoil. The screenplay for Ride with the Devil is adapted (by Lee's longtime collaborator, James Schamus) from Daniel Woodrell's novel Woe to Live On.

SECOND WEEK! | HYPER-ELECTRIFYING ACTION THAT'S HOTTER THAN BURSTING FLAMES !
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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Being friends with a former rival

CAN former rivals eventually become good friends? That's the question **Dina Bonnevie** and I are trying to answer.

We had a colorful and sometimes tempestuous past, hosting rival talk shows, my "Today with Kris Aquino" and her "D-Day" (although in fact only her last half-hour and my first were really aired smack opposite each other) for a little more than a year. Previous to that, she took over two of the shows that I chose to leave behind, RPN's "Actually Yun Na" in 1995 and my first solo talk show, GMA and Viva television's "Kris" which evolved into "Ms D" in late 1996. Needless to say, numerous comparisons were always being made.

I vacated my morning slot in March, and last week, Dina granted me a one-on-one interview on my show, "Kris and Tell." Finally, time for a truce?

The truth is I hesitated facing her. I feared some of her thinly veiled "barbs." The last thing I wanted was to be an ungracious host.

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

Warming up

Dina was punctual for our 8 p.m. taping, on that Sunday, July 1. If you watched the July 2 and 3 airings of that encounter, you'd have witnessed that we did warm up to each other, enjoying our verbal jousting, laughing at our "common denominators," and musing about the opportunity to share the tube at some future joint talk show outing. In our business, after all, nothing is impossible for as long as the network's budget can accommodate the pairing.

I sent Dina a thank you text that night after she'd given me her cell phone number. I was slightly miffed that she didn't respond immediately. That night I went home thinking, "Oh well, at least I tried to reach out and I was able to express my appreciation. Too bad if she didn't feel like reciprocating."

The next day while I was being made up for my location taping, my cell phone started ringing, and to my pleasant surprise, it was Dina. She explained that she'd failed to notice that her phone's battery had died and only charged it upon waking up. That's when she saw that I'd texted her.

Making allowances

We both have full schedules, and Thursday night was the most convenient time for us to have an early dinner and catch the film "Swordfish." We're both movie addicts and watching a flick together seemed like an excellent way to start bonding.

Late Wednesday night I was informed that I suddenly had a shoot with **Bernard Palanca** for Thursday night because he was now available to tape with me to complete my week on "Kris and Tell" with the "Hunks." I was embarrassed to inform Dina that I could only make it to dinner and we had to forego the movie.

Maybe we're at that point of a new friendship where we're more than willing to make a few allowances for each other in the hope that the friendship will develop deeper, given the chance. Dina said dinner was fine and we decided to go to Red Crab on Tomas Morato since she was coming from a dance rehearsal in GMA and I was taping in Phenomena on Timog Avenue.

For two talkers like us, an hour for dinner is way too short. I'm again trying to stick to a low-starch, low-carb diet. I had salad and grilled sirloin steak, Dina had the spicy crab cooked in coconut milk. I was impressed with how dedicated she was to her workout routine. If only I had half her exercise discipline, maybe I'd have half the chance to have a slim and taut body like hers.

Establishing trust

In a way, we could comfortably share the thrills and difficulties of talking for a living. But old habits die hard. Dina constantly reminded me that she hoped none of what she shared would come out, especially on "The Buzz." I was a bit offended with her wariness, but then again I told myself I should understand since we were just establishing our trust.

My associate producer called me even before we had our last few bites to inform me that Bernard was already at the location. Dina said she'd drop me off at my location so that my staff would know that I wasn't late on purpose and that

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BUSINESS
RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ▩ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

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Pepsi firms up offer to buy Cosmos

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

AMERICAN soft drink giant Pepsi Co. has teamed up with the Carlyle global investment group in a bid to edge out rival San Miguel Corp. in the race to take over profitable bottler Cosmos Bottling Corp.

INQUIRER sources from the banking industry revealed that Pepsico and Carlyle were jointly raising funds to top SMC's cash offer for RFM Corp.'s 85-percent stake in Cosmos.

The sources said Pepsico was threatened by the prospects of SMC, which recently regained control of Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc., taking over the second biggest soft drink bottler in the country. They said Pepsico was beefing up its offer to RFM with fresh financial muscle from Carlyle.

"They can't afford to let SMC get Cosmos because it will result in the virtual monopoly of the local soft drink by Coca Cola," one of the sources said.

Instead of simply entering into a joint venture with RFM by acquiring a minority stake in Cosmos, the sources said Pepsico was now keen on buying out RFM's entire 85-percent stake as well.

The sources said Pepsico enlisted the support of the Carlyle Group, a private global investment firm based in Washington DC with vast experience in leading or participating as equity investor in corporate buyouts, strategic minority equity investments, equity private placements, consolidations and build-ups, and growth capital financing.

Asked about the new offer from Pepsico, RFM spokesperson Ramon Lopez said: "It's true that we're still talking to potential investors but we haven't concluded any deal."

Lopez would not comment any further, except to stress that RFM would be open to other offers as it has not yet signed any deal with SMC.

RFM earlier confirmed that both SMC and Pepsico were keen on investing in Cosmos. SMC's offer was to buy out the entire stake while Pepsico was earlier interested in acquiring a minority stake.

Other sources said that the negotiations between RFM and Pepsico earlier bogged down when SMC, with ABN AMRO Bank as its financial adviser, came up with a cash offer, which Pepsico could not match. The price in consideration was earlier reported to be at least P14.5 billion.

Carlyle, the sources said, has started raising the funds needed to boost Pepsico's bid for Cosmos. Although Carlyle's operations are mostly in the United States and Europe, the investment firm has operations in Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore and Japan. It focuses its equity interests in aerospace and defense, consumer and industrial, energy, health care, IT, real estate, telecommunication sectors.

RFM shares were still among the most actively traded in the market yesterday, with the price rising by another 2.88 percent to close at P2.14.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

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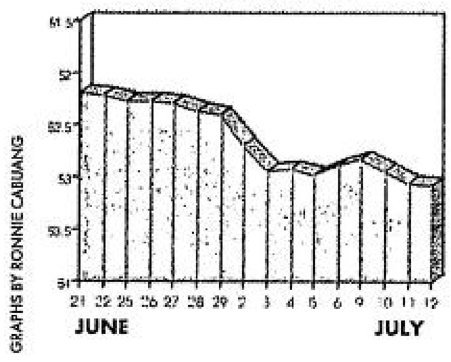


Peso-Dollar Rate

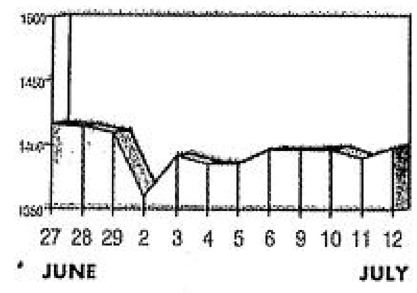
P53.08 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
July 12, 2001

¥ 124.21 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 124.21 as of 5 p.m.,
July 12, 2001

GOLD:$268.10/268.60
per ounce Hong Kong,
July 12, 2001

STOCK MARKET

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares end up

SHARES closed higher yesterday, buoyed by demand for bargain stocks, traders said.

Bargain hunters weren't dissuaded by the continuing decline of the peso against the dollar and concern over the fate of emerging markets in the face of Argentina's worsening financial crisis, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 9.32 points, or 0.7 percent, at 1,399.42, after falling 0.5 percent Wednesday.

SHARES/ B3

Vitarich signs debt deal

POULTRY integrator and livestock feeds manufacturer Vitarich Corp. has forged a new deal with its creditor-banks to restructure P1 billion worth of convertible notes.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Vitarich financial controller Edgar Durian said the creditors agreed to amend the old restructuring agreement in order to convert the company's short-term debt into a term loan and revolving credit line.

Vitarich obtained easier loan payment terms from creditors starting 1998 when its cash flow was affected by a chicken glut, the depreciation of the peso that raised the cost of feeds and materials and the escalation of its borrowing costs. Vitarich was then saddled with P3 billion in debts.

Durian said the new deal would enable Vitarich to accelerate payment on the bonds plus the accrued interest of P150 million as of September 2000.

Under the agreement, the maturity of the debt would be lengthened to seven years, inclusive of a two-year grace period. Interest will be paid quarterly at fixed rates during the first five years.

Vitarich will pay an interest rate of 10 percent a year during the first two years, 12 percent for the next two years and 14 percent for the fifth year. During the last two years, however, the company shall start paying based on the 91-day treasury bill rate plus 2 percentage points.

The principal payment shall be retired on a staggered basis. Vitarich will pay 5 percent on the first year, 10 percent on the second to the 4th year and 15 percent on the 5th year. The remaining 50 percent will be paid starting the 6th year.

"The remaining balance of P500 million of the convertible note portion of the restructured debts shall be converted into a revolving credit line," Durian said.

DOWN PAYMENT
MONTH 1
MONTH 2
MONTH 3
MONTH 4
MONTH 5
MONTH 6
MONTH 7

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1780 Series of 2001

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, July 12, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	3,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70.5	71.5	70	71	771,600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36	36	36	36	200
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	206	206	205	205	31,700
Philippine National Bank	42	42	41	41	59,100
Phil. Savings Bank	28.5	29	28.5	29	20,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	2,600
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.3	30,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	30,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1420	1425	1420	1420	910
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1240	1240	1235	1240	3,380
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	39.5	40	39.5	40	53,500
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.53	890,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	680	680	670	670	880
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	4	4.1	4	4.1	150,000
Piltel	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	110,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	70,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	695	705	695	705	36,190
Ivantage Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	100,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.034	0.035	0.033	0.035	44,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	38	38.5	38	38.5	8,600
Manila Electric Co. B	50	51.5	50	51	39,900
Petron Corp.	1.98	2.04	1.94	2.04	7,891,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	10,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.3	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.42	2.46	2.4	2.46	2,699,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.44	0.48	0.44	0.47	1,760,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	110,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.65	0.67	0.65	0.67	80,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	40,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.18	5,208,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.06	2.08	2.06	2.08	25,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.8	5	4.8	4.95	1,235,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.75	14	13.75	13.75	86,300
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	26	26.5	26	26.5	138,000
Pancake House Inc.	1.62	1.64	1.62	1.64	60,000
RFM Corp.	2.08	2.2	2.04	2.14	11,247,000
San Miguel Corp. A	42	42.5	42	42	160,600
San Miguel Corp. B	47.5	48	47.5	48	409,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	140,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hldg A	0.83	0.84	0.82	0.82	130,000
Ayala Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	515,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.48	247,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.16	1.24	1.16	1.2	3,030,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.54	1,340,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	6,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	50,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.24	2.24	2.12	2.12	35,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	100
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.215	0.23	0.215	0.225	1,420,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.76	1.82	1.76	1.82	2,353,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	140,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1,280,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	1,500,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	70,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	30.5	31.5	30.5	31	664,100
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	600,000
Ionics Inc.	11	11	11	11	100
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.04	2.06	2.04	2.06	100,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	680,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.46	3,130,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	2,300,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.5	6	5.5	5.7	175,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	660,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Corp.	1.9	1.94	1.86	1.86	70,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.68	0.7	0.68	0.68	140,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0925	0.0925	0.09	0.09	500,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.84	0.86	0.84	0.86	170,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15	15	14.25	14.25	118,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.48	2,600,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.51	0.52	0.5	0.52	2,750,000
Grand Plaza Hotel Corp.	19	19	19	19	3,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	150,000
Philippine Racing Club	5.2	5.4	5.2	5.4	5,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	40	40.5	40	40.5	284,100
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	495	495	495	495	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	461,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	2,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	700
Philweb.Com In.-Warrants	0.021	0.023	0.021	0.022	80,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	370	370	370	370	120
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.2	2,729,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	500,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	530,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	1,120,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.1	2.14	2.1	2.14	323,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	110,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.04	2.04	2,010,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.4	1,329,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	400,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	3,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	14,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.03	0.036	0.03	0.035	67,400,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	400,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.18	0.185	0.18	0.18	2,310,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.185	0.19	0.185	0.19	1,020,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	10,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	8,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	10,400,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.41	0.43	0.41	0.41	3,520,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.44	0.46	0.44	0.45	4,590,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.022	0.02	0.022	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0044	0.0044	0.0042	0.0042	6,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	210,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	140,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	6,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	952,990	69,960,590.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	194,923,690	183,971,250.00
PRO	9,051,000	27,980,380.00
Mining	110,654,000	6,862,900.00
OIL	17,350,000	306,100.00
GRAND TOTALS:	332,931,680	289,081,220.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	565.17	DOWN 2.19
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,988.58	UP 15.98
PRO	530.70	UP 3.81
Mining	1,360.84	DOWN 44.97
OIL	1.58	DOWN 0.03
All Shares Index	794.14	UP 2.61
Composite	1,399.42	UP 9.32

NO. OF ADVANCES: 37; NO. OF DECLINES: 25; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 50; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 112; NO. OF TRADES: 2,328

DISCLOSURES

CENTRAL Azucarera Don Pedro acquired 2.34 million class "B" preferred shares of **Central Azucarera de la Carlota** from **Shin-Meito Sugar Refining Co. Ltd.** for P12.5 million.

* * *

ABRA Mining & Industrial Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 31, 8 a.m. at the company's main office in Barangay Lipcann, Bangued, Abra. Stockholders as of Aug. 13 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

DMCI Holdings Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from July 25 to Aug. 8.

* * *

THE FINAL offer price of **Primex Corp.** shares on its initial public offering was pegged at P2.20 per share.

* * *

CHEMPHIL Group signed a two-year contract with **Pilipinas Shell Petroleum** for the supply of molten sulfur.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. confirmed that its subsidiary, **Mediaquest Holdings Inc.,** has completed its due-diligence review of **GMA Network Inc.**

* * *

URBANCORP Realty Developers Inc. denied it had any information that could explain the 48.39-percent increase in its share price that rose from P0.31 to P0.46 per share. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

CURRENCIES

July 12, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.163873	1.000000	53.0230
Japan	Yen	0.009360	0.008042	0.4264
United Kingdom	Pound	1.639781	1.408900	74.7041
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.149220	0.128210	6.7981
Switzerland	Franc	0.658970	0.566187	30.0209
Canada	Dollar	0.762996	0.655566	34.7601
Singapore	Dollar	0.634437	0.545108	28.9033
Australia	Dollar	0.589303	0.506329	26.8471
Bahrain	Dinar	3.087361	2.652661	140.6520
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.310367	0.266667	14.1395
Brunei	Dollar	0.632540	0.543478	28.8168
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000102	0.000088	0.0047
Thailand	Baht	0.025546	0.021949	1.1638
UAE	Dirham	0.316916	0.272294	14.4378
Korea	Won	0.000893	0.000767	0.0407
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.859200	45.5574
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.439302	23.2931
France	Franc	0.152450	0.130984	6.9452
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.389888	20.6730
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.062440	3.3108
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.021299	1.1293
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000444	0.0235
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.144507	7.6622
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004286	0.2273
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005164	0.2738
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.021299	1.1293
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.090959	57.8459

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Per DTI-NCR Permit Nos. 0658 and 1802 Series of 2001

No tiene Razon

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

FRESH from a chilly San Francisco holiday, port services king Enrique Razon Jr. yesterday met with the analyst brigade who had been confused by his company's disclosures as to the real price ICTSI sold its overseas operations to Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing.

Ever *gracioso* despite the frosty market reception to the news of the buyout, Razon yesterday treated the stock market analysts—a number of whom do not know where their next meal would come from, given the state the market has sunk into—to a "rubbery chicken" (Razon's description, not ours) lunch at the Shangri-La Makati, before proceeding with the usual song-and-dance routine.

The 41-year-old Castilaloy chair and president of International Container Terminal Services Inc. began the spiel by gently mocking the native numbers-crunchers with "not knowing how to add," before rolling out fresh numbers.

With Razon himself now staking his name on the figures—he did not display his trademark nervous twitch that he normally exhibits when he is being parsimonious with the truth among friends—the stock floggers should now get a more accurate financial fix as to the state of affairs in ICTSI.

In any case, the bottom line is that when the combined equity-debt deal with the Hong Kong shipping tycoon shall have been concluded by June 15, 2002, ICTSI's pre-deal debt load of P17 billion "shall have been wiped out."

Before the Li Ka-shing deal, ICTSI's book value, by the company's own estimate, was P1.50 per share; the stock closed at P2.46 yesterday, after spurting to as high as P3.35 before the deal was officially disclosed late last month.

He attributed the wild swings in the ICTSI share price to the *tsupiteros* and the usual pump-and-dump suspects denounced by Dante Tan of BW Resources. Given the paper thin volumes of the daily trading, it was quite easy to steer the market with a combination of rumors and a few millions.

"But then again, you need the likes of . . .; without him, the market would have been truly dead," Razon said.

Razon maintained that he did not play the market himself, but that his advice, to those who could not resist gambling with it, is to play contrarian to whatever the cabal of players advise.

On a more positive note, Razon disclosed that he and Li Ka-shing had forged a partnership and that ICTSI and Hutchison Whampoa, who during the Ramos years were bitter competitors, were looking into developing a deep-sea port venture in Batangas.

"Compared to Argentina, this country is booming," Razon said, adding that he could not understand why so many Filipinos, including newspaper columnists (present company excluded), could be so negative about the prospects of this country.

"If you have nothing to contribute, stop bitching and belly-aching," he said, to the amens of two suit guys from Metrobank.

To escape from the crippling vagaries of foreign exchange, Razon said the ICTSI has now changed its financing strategy for new port ventures away from loading up foreign debt on the parent company level to project financing at the local level plus some equity from the parent company.

Going back to his partnership with Li Ka-shing, it seemed that Razon's ICTSI and Li's Hutchison Whampoa have found a working synergy; ICTSI, which is good with deal-making and opening doors in Third World countries and Hutchison, which he said was good at mergers and acquisition, given its financial muscle.

One huge market that Razon would like to crack into is the United States, beginning with South Carolina.

"The United States loves to lecture about privatization; yet it has the most closed door as far as port privatization is concerned," he said.

Heard through the grapevine

ENRIQUE Razon Jr., who also subsidizes the anemic Manila Standard, disclosed that he would be taking in a new "local" partner in his broadsheet for the equivalent of 10-percent equity.

In addition, the unnamed partner is also going to write a column, he said.

Contrary to the belief that the Sorianos own the paper's printing presses, Razon said he now controls both the press and the editorial side "100 percent."

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Shares end up

(From page B1)

"Selling pressure has abated for some stocks and there's light buying, which caused a minor uptick," said Equitable PCI Bank fund manager Edison Yap.

Traders said selling pressure also eased following the 0.6 percent rise of the Dow Jones Industrial Average on Wednesday.

The continuing decline of the peso, though, may have caused the stock market's liquidity to drop further as investors shied away, traders said. The dollar reached as high as P53.40 in morning trading, after closing at P53.065 Wednesday. *AP*

ITOGON-SUYOC MINES, INC.

NOTICE OF STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Itogon-Suyoc Mines, Inc. (the "Corporation") scheduled on July 16, 2001 has been postponed to July 25, 2001, Wednesday at 8:30 in the morning at the Antipolo Ballroom, Valle Verde Country Club, Captain Henry Vargas Street, Bo. Ugong, Pasig City. The Agenda for the meeting shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order.
2. Certification by the Corporate Secretary to the sending of notices and existence of a quorum.
3. Approval of the minutes of the stockholders' meeting held on May 5, 2000.
4. Presentation of the annual report of the President and Chairman of the Board.
5. Approval of audited financial statements for Calendar Year 2000.
6. Ratification of acts, resolutions and decisions of the Board of Directors and Management.
7. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation:
   a. declassification of shares of stock (common "A" and "B") into one class of common shares;
   b. denial of pre-emptive rights;
   c. to include among secondary purposes the business of information technology, telecommunication and other similar businesses.
8. Authority to the Board of Directors to sell, alienate and/or dispose of any or all its property and assets.
9. Nomination and election of eleven (11) directors.
10. Re-appointment of external auditors.
11. Other Matters.

Only stockholders of record as of Monday, June 11, 2001 are entitled to notice of and to vote at said meeting. The stock and transfer book of the Company will be closed from June 11, 2001 to July 25, 2001 both dates inclusive.

In accordance with Section 8 of Articles II of the amended by-laws of the Corporation, proxies should be submitted to the Corporate Secretary at least five (5) working days prior to the scheduled date of meeting.

(Sgd.) JOCELYN I. SANCHEZ-SALAZAR
Corporate Secretary

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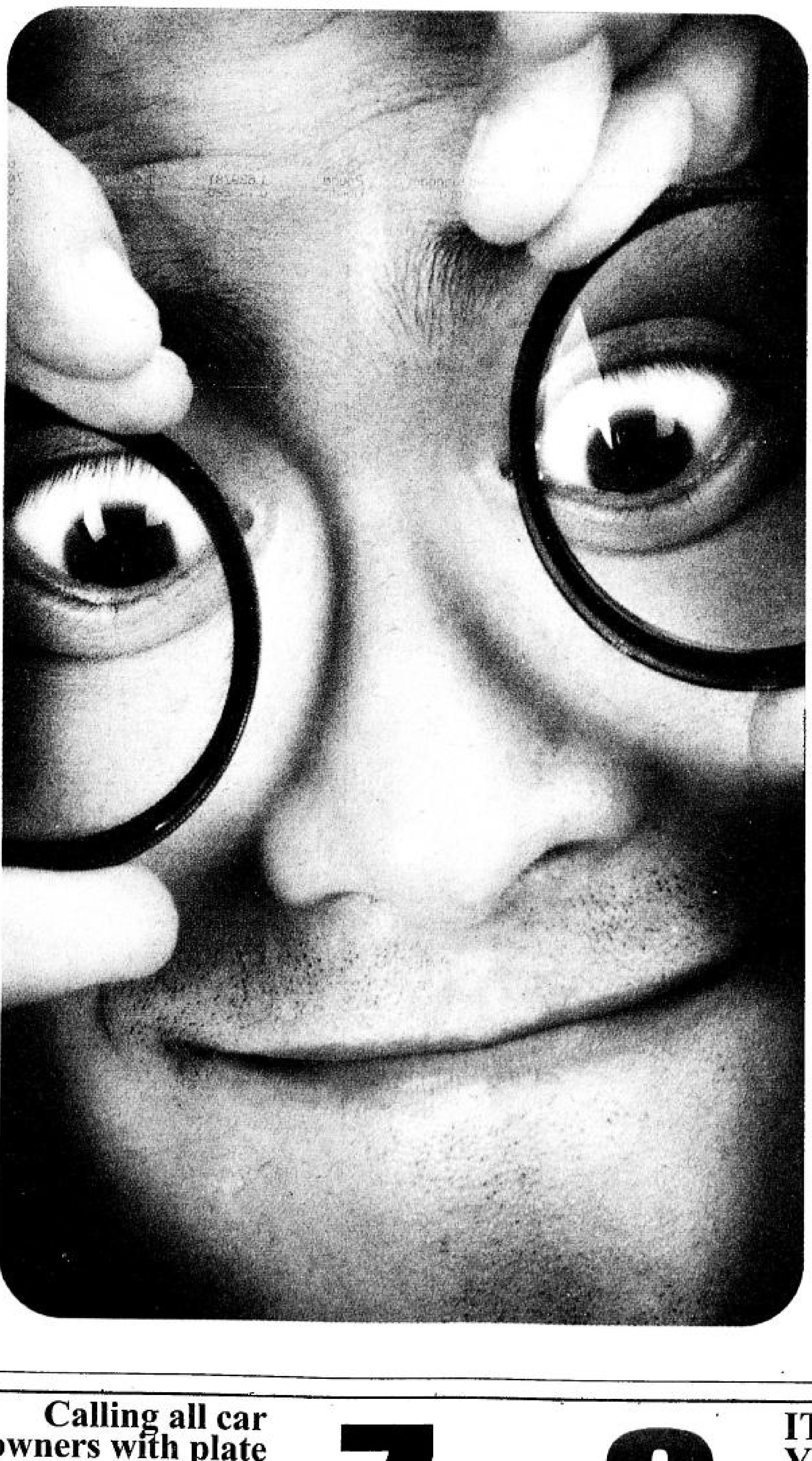

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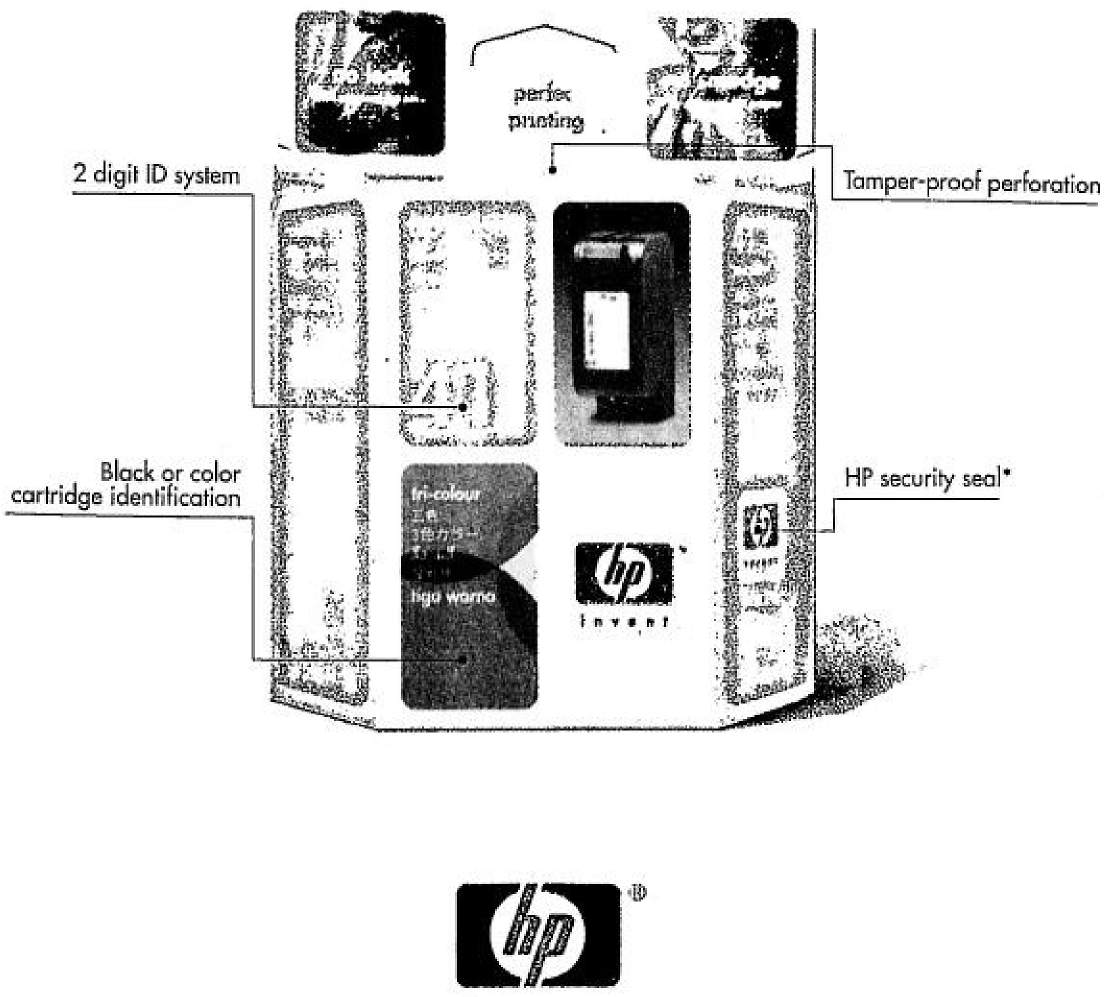

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ICTSI sets sight on building 60-hectare port in Batangas

By Elena R. Torrijos

PUBLICLY listed port operator International Container Terminal Services Inc. is considering a joint venture with Hutchison Ports Holdings, a subsidiary of Hong Kong-based Hutchison Whampoa Ltd., for the multibillion-peso development of a 60-hectare private port in Batuan, Batangas.

ICTSI chair Enrique Razon told reporters the company was also preparing to bid for five international ports.

"We may look at a new port on the road with (Hutchison Ports), probably Batangas. (We'll) do this on a 60-40 project," Razon said.

The cost to develop a deep-sea international port in Batangas would likely amount to P10 billion, he said.

He clarified, however, that issues involving the construction of a highway leading to Batuan would have to be settled first before the ICTSI-Hutchison project could take off.

ICTSI, together with some partners, already has 20 hectares in Batangas that it acquired four years ago. It needs another 40 hectares.

Razon also disclosed that ICTSI was eyeing contracts to operate five international ports in Kingston, Jamaica; Bandar Abas, Iran; Dunbar and Capetown in South Africa; and Melbourne, Sydney.

Razon said ICTSI was bidding next month for the management of a Jamaican port that was handling containers of 1 million ton equivalent units. No date had yet been set for the privatization or bidding of the four other ports, he added.

Last month, minority shareholders of ICTSI agreed to sell their 49-percent stake in ICTSI's international holding company to Hutchison Whampoa.

With this deal, Hutchison ended up controlling 74 percent of ICTSI International Holdings Corp. ICTSI agreed to sell to Hutchison International Port Holdings Ltd. its 25-percent stake in the holding firm.

Analysts expect ICTSI to generate around $400 million to $450 million in cash from the sale of its stake in IIHC, which operates eight container terminals in Argentina, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Tanzania and Thailand.

The deal excludes newly awarded port contracts in Suape, Brazil, which ICTSI still plans to pursue.

Razon said an ICTSI subsidiary, International Container Terminal Holdings Inc., still held 43.27 million preferred "B" shares representing 36 percent of the outstanding shares of IIHC.

He said ICTHI had given Hutchison the option to likewise buy its stake after one year.

ICTHI will also sell its interest in Ensanada Cruiseport Village SA, an operator of a Mexican cruise port, to Hutchison.

The other shareholders of IIHC are JP Morgan Capital LP, Sixty Wall Street Fund LP, Kane & Co., Capital International Global Emerging Markets Private Equity Fund LP and the ICTSI employees stock ownership plan.

Hutchison International Port holds and manages port and related services worldwide, operating a total of 136 berths in 19 ports together with a number of transportation-related service companies.

Racing club signs deal to relocate San Lazaro

By Doris C. Dumlao

MANILA Jockey Club Inc., one of the country's oldest racing clubs, has signed a deal with KPPI Land Corp. to complete earlier plans to move its San Lazaro racetrack out of Metro Manila.

After forging a deal with SM Prime Holdings Inc. to put up a shopping mall in a portion of its 16-hectare San Lazaro property, Manila Jockey enlisted KPPI to develop a new, world-class racetrack in Carmona, Cavite.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Manila Jockey said the deal would jumpstart the development of the San Lazaro racetrack into a mixed-use commercial complex.

Manila Jockey earlier forged a deal to sell a real estate holding unit to retail tycoon Henry Sy's SM Prime to transfer four hectares of the San Lazaro property to SM Prime.

With a new SM shopping mall within the complex, Manila Jockey hopes to attract other developers and locators to invest in the area.

The company has long been planning to diversify into real estate development in anticipation of the sector's rebound.

Manila Jockey has also been under pressure to scout for alternative sources of revenues, as its earnings from racing activities continue to shrink with rising costs and declining patronage.

The race club is, however, still expected to continue holding horse races at the San Lazaro racetrack pending the completion of the new facility in Cavite.

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Canlas sees 6.9% inflation this month

By Clarissa S. Batino

INFLATION would likely move up slightly this month due to higher food prices caused by typhoon-related damages on domestic farm products, Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said yesterday.

In an interview, Canlas forecast a rate of 6.9 percent this month from last month's 6.7 percent.

"Preliminary estimates for July point to an inflation of 6.8 to 6.9 percent," Canlas, who heads the National Economic and Development Authority, told reporters.

He expressed confidence, however, that the government would meet its full-year inflation of a 6 to 7 percent.

Inflation refers to a sustained increase in the prices of basic commodities and services that result in a decrease in the purchasing power of money.

A surge in food and fuel prices combined with pressures from the peso depreciation and school year opening expenditures jacked up the country's annual inflation rate to 6.7 percent last month from 6.5 percent in May.

Canlas said Typhoon Feria, one of the strongest to hit the country in 20 years, was pushing up the prices of fruits and vegetables, but its impact would eventually taper off in the coming months.

Canlas took comfort in the fact that the prices of rice and corn, the country's staples, remained stable. "There was no major destruction in rice and corn, and a lot of the rice was harvested in April," he noted.

Milk prices, however, have been rising because of the peso's depreciation against the dollar. The country imports its dairy requirements, including milk.

Canlas said the impact of a 40-centavo-per-liter hike in petroleum prices in May should hit the economy starting this month, but he stressed it was unlikely to have significant effect.

He said transport fares and wages, which had a more direct impact on inflation, had not moved.

Subic Bay investments hit ₱1.1B

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

INVESTMENTS in the Subic Bay Freeport Zone hit P1.1 billion in the first six months, way off the P8.5-billion annual target set by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority over the next five years.

SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo Jr. said the SBMA was still sticking to its P42.5-billion cumulative investment target by 2005 as he expected capital inflows to improve substantially starting next year.

Payumo said the local political crisis and the global economic slowdown had tempered businessmen's appetite for new and expansion projects this year.

"We expected investments to go up and down within the next five years, but we are still confident we would hit our target by 2005," Payumo said.

He said the SBMA had moved to change its development strategy for Subic by forging a closer alliance with the Clark Special Economic Zone and letting the private sector take the lead in developing parts of the former American naval base.

Payumo said more investors would take more interest in the former American bases with the proposed Subic-Clark expressway, which would substantially cut down travel time between the two economic zones that would enable locators in both to take advantage of Subic's deep sea harbor and Clark's international airport.

SBMA is developing two port terminal projects and expanding the existing port that will allow the Subic Port to handle all kinds of cargo.

SBMA is looking at a rebound in investments by next year with the agency's decision to invite multinational corporations to establish their regional headquarters in Subic.

SBMA's projected investments of at least $850 million (P42.5 billion) from 2001 to 2005 is 30 percent of what the agency has generated since taking over Subic in 1992. At least 55 percent of the projected investments would come from foreign investors.

The bulk of the investments or P3.5 billion a year would go to real estate development projects particularly for hotel-resorts and the proposed convention center and eco-tourism development project.

An estimated P3 billion a year would go to infotech projects, tourism and utility concerns. Roughly P1.81 billion in new investments would go to manufacturing concerns, particularly for light assembly electronics.

These investments are expected to create 12,500 new jobs by 2005 and exports are likely to more than double to $2.1 billion by 2005 from $1 billion this year.

RP sees trade deals with Taiwan

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES is willing to give concessions in fishery and investments to Taipei in exchange for greater access of Philippine agriculture products to Taiwan.

This was revealed yesterday by Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II in his opening statement in the 9th Manila-Taipei Joint Economic Conference.

Roxas expressed confidence that the Philippines and Taiwan could make breakthroughs in enhancing their economic ties and narrow down the differences in their relations during the two-day discussions.

Roxas said the Philippines was eager to conclude a double taxation agreement with Taiwan; adopt a more simplified and streamlined process in the grant of visas to Taiwanese businessmen and tourists; approve the Manila-Taipei ATA Carnet Protocol; and craft a mutually beneficial cooperation agreement on the sea lane for fishing vessels.

Taiwanese businessmen have long complained about the double taxation issue in the Philippines that other Asean countries have addressed. The Carnet Protocol will allow duty-free importation of Taiwanese commodities into the Philippines provided they are re-exported. Diplomatic relation between the Philippines and Taiwan has been stirred by the poaching of Taiwanese fishermen in Philippine territory.

In return for the concessions, Roxas said the Philippines would ask Taiwan to speed up the resolution of sanitary issues affecting Philippine fresh bananas and young coconut. "Philippine agriculture officials are ready to discuss and agree on a timetable with their Taiwanese counterparts to ensure that progressive developments on these quarantine issues could be made by the next conference meeting."

Roxas is also offering the Philippines as a production base for Taiwan's agriculture requirements, specifically through contract-farming arrangement in Northern Luzon. "The availability of land and labor in the Philippines plus the marketing skills and technology of Taiwan's agriculture sector could combine to solve the rising cost of agricultural production in Taiwan," Roxas said.

Roxas also expressed keen interest in boosting tourism cooperation between the two countries by forming a joint venture for the development of tourism facilities.

Taiwan is currently the 5th biggest export market and import source of the Philippines. Two-way trade between Taiwan and the Philippines has been increasing 24.4 percent annually in the last five years.

Tollway project seen to get $791M in loan

THE BASES Conversion Development Authority is expected to clinch a 41.931-billion yen (about $791.151 million) loan deal with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for the construction of the 89-kilometer Subic-Clark toll road.

This was disclosed by BCDA Chair Rogelio Singson, who said the requirements set by the Department of Finance for the grant of a sovereign guarantee for the JBIC loan were now being completed.

The Development Bank of the Philippines earlier granted BCDA a P1-billion loan to finance the acquisition of the right of way for the project. Singson said the proceeds of the DBP loan would be released soon.

This is the first time BCDA is securing an official development assistance (ODA), Singson said. He said BCDA was confident it could complete all the DOF requirements within the third quarter of the year.

The 89-kilometer toll road project will link the seaport of Subic to the airport facilities of Clark. The linkage is expected to create a new economic growth corridor to benefit the entire Central Luzon.

This is in line with the Subic-Clark Alliance Development Program, Singson said.

BCDA has started the final alignment survey works on this flagship project, Singson added.

Cebu Pacific starts int'l flights in Oct.

By Abigail L. Ho

CEBU Pacific Air is set to start flying international in October.

"We already have an agreement with US-based Pegasus Aviation Inc., one of the world's largest leasing companies, for the lease of two 200-seater B757s, with an option to lease additional aircraft, plus an option to upgrade to bigger aircraft," Cebu Pacific president and CEO Lance Gokongwei said.

The Gokongwei-owned firm is also confident that it will get a good share of the international aviation arena.

"We are primarily a great value airline. The definition of value may change as the market changes or expands, but Cebu Pacific is always ready to adapt and be receptive to these changes," Gokongwei said. However, the company has yet to finalize its overseas destinations.

Cebu Pacific got a temporary operating permit to fly international scheduled flights from the Civil Aeronautics Board early last month.

The airline, however, has yet to secure the Civil Aeronautics Board's and President Macapagal-Arroyo's approval of its final destinations.

"For Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Guam, we already got the President's approval. We just have to wait for this to be transmitted to these countries," Cebu Pacific vice president for corporate planning and external affairs Peggy Vera said in an earlier interview.

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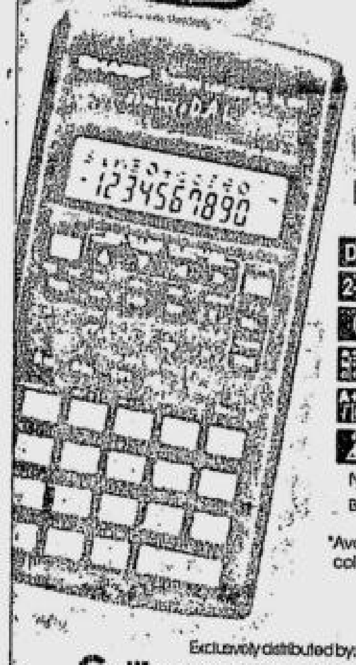

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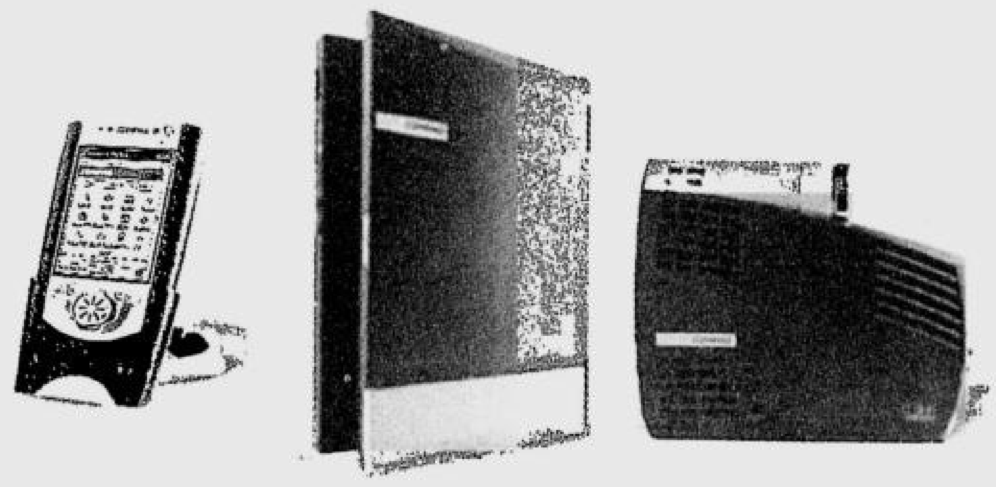

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COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS

Manila

PRESENT:

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PLEBISCITE TO RATIFY THE AMENDMENTS TO THE ORGANIC ACT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO.	BENIPAYO, Alfredo, L.,	Chairman
	TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.,	Commissioner
	JAVIER, Rufino S.B.,	Commissioner
	LANTION, Ralph C.,	Commissioner
	SADAIN, Mehol K.,	Commissioner
	BORRA, Resurreccion Z.,	Commissioner
	TUASON, Jr. Florentino A.,	Commissioner

x——————————————x Promulgated: 11 July 2001

RESOLUTION NO. 4502

The Commission on Elections, by virtue of the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 6734 as amended by Republic Act No. 9054 and other pertinent election laws, RESOLVED to promulgate, as it hereby promulgates, the following Rules and Regulations to govern the plebiscite to ratify the amendments to the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

ARTICLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Declaration of policy. - The plebiscite to ratify the amendments to the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is a non-partisan political activity.

Sec. 2. Date and places of plebiscite. - The plebiscite shall be held on August 14, 2001, in the following places:

Region	***Province***	***City***
IV	Palawan	Puerto Princesa City
IX	Basilan	Isabela City
	Tawi-Tawi	
	Zamboanga del Norte	Dapitan City
		Dipolog City
	Zamboanga del Sur	Zamboanga City
		Pagadian City
	Zamboanga Sibugay	
	Sulu	
XI	Davao del Sur	Digos City
	South Cotabato	Gen. Santos City
		Koronadal City
	Sarangani	
XII	North Cotabato	Kidapawan City
	Lanao del Norte	Iligan City
	Lanao del Sur	Marawi City
	Sultan Kudarat	Tacurong City
	Maguindanao	Cotabato City

Sec. 3. Plebiscite and campaign periods. - The plebiscite period shall be for sixty (60) days commencing on June 30, 2001 and ending on August 29, 2001.

The campaign period shall commence forty-five (45) days before the plebiscite or on June 30, 2001 and end at midnight of August 12, 2001.

Campaigning shall not be allowed on August 13, 2001 and on August 14, 2001.

ARTICLE II
CAMPAIGN AND PROPAGANDA MATERIALS

Sec. 4. Supervision by the Commission. - The Commission on Elections (Commission) shall supervise the campaign, the distribution of propaganda materials and the use and employment of press, radio and television facilities so as to give all proponents and oppositors, whether as individuals or as groups, equal opportunity under equal circumstances to make known their stand on the issues within the limits allowed by law.

Sec. 5. Assembly meeting or "pulong-pulong". - (a) Every barangay within the plebiscite areas shall hold at least one assembly meeting or "pulong-pulong" during the campaign period under the supervision of the Election Officer to enlighten the voters on the amendments to the Organic Act to be voted upon in the plebiscite.

If one meeting will not be sufficient, the barangay officials may hold as many meetings or "pulong-pulong" as may be adequate for the purpose herein stated.

All Provincial Election Supervisors shall see to it that this provision is complied with, within their respective areas of supervision.

(b) The punong barangay or his duly authorized representative shall:

1. Act as presiding officer or moderator during the meeting;
2. See to it that the discussions and debates are free and constructive and that speakers for both the affirmative and negative sides of the questions are given equal opportunity and time to expound on their views;
3. Invite speakers or resource persons from both private and public sectors, who are knowledgeable on the plebiscite issues for the enlightenment of the registered voters in the barangay. Any barangay member shall be free to ask questions and voice his opinion on any side of the plebiscite question; and
4. Certify in writing that a "pulong-pulong" in the barangay has been held. It shall state the date and place of the meeting, the number of persons who attended and the names of resource speakers, if any. Said certification shall be submitted to the Election Officer.

The Election Officer shall report to the Commission by telegram, through the Education and Information Department, within three days after the campaign period, the number of "pulong-pulong" held in every barangay in his jurisdiction.

Sec. 6. Applicability of COMELEC Resolution No. 3636. – The provisions of Comelec Resolution No. 3636 implementing Republic Act No. 9006, otherwise known as Fair Election Act, promulgated on March 1, 2001 shall, insofar as applicable, apply.

Sec. 7. Right of government officials and employees to express opinion for or against the ratification. - All government officials and employees, as well as those in government-owned or controlled corporations with original charters, who are residing or holding office in the provinces or cities where the plebiscite shall be held, may publicly express their opinion on any of the issues related to the plebiscite during the campaign period.

Sec. 8. Prohibition on Comelec officials, employees and its deputies. - In order to maintain the independent and non-partisan status of the Commission, its Chairman, Commissioners, officials, employees and deputies are prohibited from publicly expressing their views and opinion on, and from campaigning for or against, the ratification of the amendments to the Organic Act.

ARTICLE III
PRECINCTS AND POLLING PLACES

Sec. 9. Precincts and polling places. - For purposes of the August 14, 2001 plebiscite, the precincts established and the grouping scheme as adopted in the May 14, 2001 National and Local elections shall be used.

ARTICLE IV
PLEBISCITE COMMITTEE

Sec. 10. Plebiscite committee. - There shall be a Plebiscite Committee composed of three (3) members who must be public school teachers and who shall conduct the plebiscite in the polling place for each precinct or grouped precincts. The district supervisor concerned shall submit to the Election Officer, the list of teachers recommended as members of the Plebiscite Committee with the plantilla of positions as supporting document to show the rank of each recommendee. The highest-ranking teacher shall be appointed as chairman.

In case there are not enough public school teachers, teachers in private schools, employees in the civil service, or other citizens of known probity and competence, who are registered voters of the province/city may be appointed for plebiscite duty in the order given.

The Commission shall constitute, through the Election Officers, the Plebiscite Committees not later than July 14, 2001.

Sec. 11. Qualifications of members of the plebiscite committee. - The chairman and members of the Plebiscite Committee or their substitutes must:

(a) Be of good moral character and of irreproachable reputation;
(b) Have never been convicted of any election offense or of any other crime punishable by more than six (6) months of imprisonment;
(c) Have no pending information for any election offense against them; and
(d) Know how to read and write English or the local dialect.

Sec. 12. Disqualifications. - No person shall serve as chairman or member of a Plebiscite Committee if he is related within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity to any member of the same committee.

Sec. 13. Powers and duties of the plebiscite committee. - The Plebiscite Committee shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) Supervise and conduct the voting in the polling place on August 14, 2001;
(b) Count the votes and thereafter prepare the plebiscite returns;
(c) Deliver the book/s of voters and lists of voters to the Election Officer for custody and safekeeping not later than August 18, 2001;
(d) Furnish watchers signed certificates of votes upon written request; and
(e) Act as deputies of the Commission in the supervision and control of the plebiscite in the polling places wherein they are assigned to ensure the holding of free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible plebiscite.

The Plebiscite Committee shall have full authority to maintain order within the polling place and its premises, to keep access thereto open and unobstructed, and to enforce obedience to its lawful orders.

If any person shall refuse to obey lawful orders of the Plebiscite Committee or shall conduct himself in a disorderly manner in its presence or within its hearing and thereby interrupts or disturbs its proceedings, the Plebiscite Committee may issue an order in writing directing any peace officer to take such person into custody until the adjournment of the meeting, but such order shall not be executed as to prevent [illegible] from [illegible] peace officer to whom it may be delivered, but if none is present, by any other person deputized by the Committee in writing; and

(f) Perform such other functions/duties as may be prescribed by the Commission.

Sec. 14. Temporary designation of members of the plebiscite committee. - If at the time the Plebiscite Committee must meet, all the positions in the committee are vacant, or if not one of the appointed members shall appear, the watchers present may, in writing, designate non-partisan registered voters of the precinct to act in the place of the absent members until they shall appear or the vacancies are filled. Such appointments and the names of the appointees shall be recorded in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

Sec. 15. Proceedings of the plebiscite committee. - The meeting of the Plebiscite Committee shall be public and shall be held only in the polling place designated by the Commission.

Sec. 16. Functioning of the plebiscite committee. - The Plebiscite Committee shall act through the chairman and shall decide without delay by majority vote all questions which may arise in the performance of its duties.

ARTICLE V
LISTS OF VOTERS
AND BOOK OF VOTERS

Sec. 17. Lists of Voters. - The Election Officer shall print two (2) copies of the revised CVL Form 2 and four (4) copies of CVL Report 1-B, all of which shall be certified by the Election Registration Board. The two copies of CVL Form 2 and two (2) copies of CVL Report 1-B shall be given to the Plebiscite Committees for use on plebiscite day. The other two (2) copies of CVL Report 1-B shall be distributed as follows:

(a) One copy for posting at the office of the Election Officer; and
(b) One copy for posting at the bulletin board of the municipal hall;

Sec. 18. Posting of the CVL. - The Election Officer shall post the CVL Report 1-B on July 15, 2001 in his office and in the bulletin boards of the municipal/city hall.

The Plebiscite Committee shall post one (1) copy of CVL Report 1-B at the polling place on plebiscite day before the opening of the polls.

Sec. 19. Notification; inspection; verification and sealing of the book of voters. - The Election Registration Boards shall, starting July 10, 2001 until July 14, 2001, notify representatives of proponents and oppositors and the Plebiscite Committees to inspect and verify the completeness of the Voter Registration Records of each precinct compiled in the books of voters.

The Plebiscite Committees and the representatives of proponents and oppositors shall, starting July 15, 2001 until July 30, 2001, inspect, verify and certify as to the completeness of the Voter Registration Records in the precinct book of voters. The Election Registration Board shall seal the books of voters in the presence of the representatives of the proponents and oppositors and the Plebiscite Committees. All books of voters must be sealed not later than July 30, 2001 and shall not be available for examination by the public. They shall remain in the custody of the Election Officer who shall deliver the same to the chairmen of the Plebiscite Committees when they secure the official ballots and other paraphernalia on plebiscite day.

ARTICLE VI
PLEBISCITE FORMS AND SUPPLIES

Sec. 20. Forms and supplies. - The Plebiscite Committee shall be provided with the following documents, forms and supplies for use on plebiscite day:

FORMS	TITLE	RATE OF DISTRIBUTION
CEF NO. 3	Poster Indicating Precinct Number	1 piece
CEF NO. 5 & 5A	Appointment of Plebiscite Committee	9 pieces
CEF NO. 6	Plebiscite Official Ballots	1 piece per reg. voter plus 3 per grouped precinct
CEF NO. 9	Plebiscite Returns	1 set of 4 copies
CEF NO. 10	Tally Board	1 piece
CEF NO. 11	Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes	1 set of 2 copies
CEF NO. 12	Paper Seals	16 pieces
CEF NO.12-A	Paper Seal for Book of Voters	1 piece
CEF No. 13	Certificate of Votes for Watcher	10 sheets
CEF NO. 14	Certificate of Receipt of Plebiscite Ballots, Other Forms and Supplies by Plebiscite Committee	3 pieces
CEF NO. 27-A	Official Receipt of Plebiscite Returns for PBC	2 pieces
SPECIAL ENVELOPES		
CEF NO. 15	Envelope for Counted Official Ballots	1 piece
CEF NO. 16	Envelope for Excess/Marked/Spoiled/Unused ballots	1 piece
CEF NO. 17-1	Envelope for Plebiscite Returns copy for the PBC/CBC	1 piece
CEF NO. 17-B-1	Envelope for Plebiscite Returns copy for the COMELEC	1 piece
CEF NO. 17-C-1	Envelope for Plebiscite Returns copy for the Citizens Arm	1 piece
CEF NO. 17-F-1	Envelope for Plebiscite Returns copy for the Ballot Box	1 piece
CEF NO. 18 & 18-A	Envelope for Minutes of Voting & Counting of Votes	2 pieces
CEF NO. 19	Envelope for Key to Ballot Box - EO	1 piece
CEF NO. 28	Envelope for Plebiscite Official Ballots	1 piece
OTHER FORMS		
Election Watchers I.D. In Polling Place		2 pieces
General Instructions for Plebiscite Committee on Plebiscite Day		3 copies
CANVASSING FORMS		
CEF NO. 26	Certificate of Canvass	1 set of 5 copies
CEF NO. 26-A	Statement of Votes by Precinct	1 set of 3 copies
CEF NO. 26-A	Statement of Votes by Province/City/Municipality	1 set of 3 copies
CEF NO. 26-B, B-1 to B-4	Envelope for CEF 26 & CEF 26-A	1 set of 5 copies

SUPPLIES

ITEMS	RATE OF DISTRIBUTION
Ballot Box	1 piece
Padlocks with Key	3 pieces
Fixed Length Seal	2 pieces
Ballpen	13 pieces
Bond Paper Long	30 sheets
Thumbprint Taker	2 pieces
Carbon Paper	5 sheets
Rubber Band	6 pieces
Indelible Stain Ink	2 bottles
Ballot Secrecy Folder	10 pieces

Sec. 21. Official plebiscite ballot. - The official plebiscite ballots shall:

(a) be of uniform size in the shape of a strip with stub and detachable coupon and printed on a paper with watermarks or other marks which will readily distinguish the ballot paper from ordinary paper.
(b) bear at the top on the middle portion thereof, the coat of arms of the Republic of the Philippines, the words "Official Ballot", the name of the province/city/municipality where the plebiscite is held, the date of the plebiscite, and the following notice: "Fill out this ballot secretly inside the voting booth. Do not put any distinctive mark on any part of this ballot.";
(c) have the following questions printed:
    1) For the voters in the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi:
    DO YOU VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE AMENDMENTS TO REPUBLIC ACT 6734, THE ORGANIC ACT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO, AS PROPOSED UNDER THIS ORGANIC ACT, WHICH INCLUDES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE EXPANSION OF THE AREA OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION?
    2) For the voters in the provinces of Basilan, Cotabato, Davao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Palawan, Sarangani, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay and in the cities of Cotabato, Dapitan, Digos, Dipolog, Koronadal, Tacurong, General Santos, Iligan, Kidapawan, Marawi, Pagadian, Puerto Princesa, Zamboanga and Isabela:
    DO YOU VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE INCLUSION OF YOUR PROVINCE OR CITY IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO?

    A Pilipino translation of the above questions shall be printed on the official ballots.

    In areas where Arabic is of general use, the question to be voted for shall be printed in Arabic in addition to and immediately below the English version.
(d) be distributed at the rate of one ballot for each registered voter plus three (3) per precinct.

Sec. 22. Safeguards. - In the delivery of the official plebiscite ballots and other forms and documents to the different Plebiscite Committees, the city/municipal treasurer and the Election Officer shall adopt such measures as may be necessary to protect and ensure their integrity.

ARTICLE VII
CASTING OF VOTES

Sec. 23. Who may vote. - All registered voters as of May 14, 2001 elections may vote in the plebiscite.

Sec. 24. Voting hours. - The casting of votes shall start promptly at seven o'clock in the morning on plebiscite day and shall end at three o'clock in the afternoon, except when there are voters present within thirty meters in front of the polling place who have not yet cast their votes, in which case the voting shall continue but only to allow said voters to cast their votes without interruption. The poll clerk shall, without delay, prepare a complete list containing the names of said voters consecutively numbered, and the voters so listed shall be called to vote by announcing each name repeatedly three times in the order in which they are listed. Any voter in the list who [illegible] when his name is called out shall not be permitted to vote.

Sec. 25. Preliminaries to the voting. - (a) The Plebiscite Committee shall meet at the polling place at six thirty o'clock in the morning of plebiscite day, bringing with them the forms and supplies which they received from the Election Officer, municipal treasurer or such other official as may be designated by the Commission;

(b) The members of the Plebiscite Committee shall each keep one (1) of the three (3) keys to the padlocks of the ballot box during the voting;
(c) The Plebiscite Committee shall post all required instructions, notices and lists;
(d) The chairman shall open the ballot box, empty its compartments and exhibit them to all those present, then lock its interior cover with three (3) padlocks; and
(e) The chairman shall forthwith show to the public and the watchers present the package of official ballots and the sealed book of voters and thereafter break the seals. Such fact, together with the total number of pads and the serial numbers of the ballots found in the package, shall be entered in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

Sec. 26. Minutes of voting and counting of votes. - The Plebiscite Committee shall accomplish in two (2) copies the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes entering therein all data required as they become available and all acts as they occur. Copies of the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes shall be signed by the members of the Plebiscite Committee and sealed in separate envelopes and distributed as follows:

(a) the original, to the Election Officer who shall in turn transmit the same to the Records and Statistics Division of the ERSD, COMELEC, Manila; and
(b) the second copy to be deposited inside the compartment of the ballot box for valid ballots.

Sec. 27. Persons allowed inside the polling place. - During the voting, only the following persons shall be allowed inside the polling place:

(a) Members of the Plebiscite Committee;
(b) Watchers;
(c) Representatives of the Commission;
(d) Voters casting their votes;
(e) Voters waiting for their turn to cast their votes and whose number shall not exceed ten (10) at any one time; and
(f) Other persons who may be specifically authorized by the Commission.

The watchers shall stay only in the space reserved for them, it being illegal for them to enter places reserved for the voters or for the Plebiscite Committee or to mingle and talk with the voters within the polling place.

Sec. 28. Persons not allowed in and around the polling place. - The following persons are not allowed to enter any polling place during the voting, except to vote, in which case they shall immediately leave the polling place after the voting:

(a) any officer or member of the AFP or the Philippine National Police (PNP);
(b) any peace officer, or any armed person belonging to any extra-legal police agency, special forces, strike forces;
(c) Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGUs) and other similar forces or para-military forces, including security guards, special policemen.
(d) barangay officials, including barangay tanods; and
(e) all other kinds of armed or unarmed extra-legal police officers.

In case of policemen or peace officers, they shall stay outside the polling place but within the radius of thirty (30) meters to be easily called by the Plebiscite Committee at any time. However, they may enter the polling place, when:

(a) there is an actual disturbance of the peace and order in the polling place; and
(b) they are ordered in writing by a majority vote of the Plebiscite Committee for their protection and that of the voters or that of the plebiscite documents and paraphernalia. Such orders shall be entered in the Minutes.

In no case shall they hold any conversation with any voter or disturb, prevent or obstruct in any manner the free access of the voters to the polling place.

Sec. 29. Order of voting. - The voters shall fall in line in the order of their arrival in the polling place and cast their votes in the same order. They shall not crowd around the table of the Plebiscite Committee and shall immediately depart after having voted.

Sec. 30. Manner of obtaining ballots. –

(a) The voter shall approach the chairman and give his name and address; The chairman shall check the voter's name from CVL Form 2. If his name is in CVL Form 2, he shall be allowed to vote. If it does not appear therein, the chairman shall refer to the book of voters. If the voter's Voter Registration Record is in the book of voters, his name shall be added in the CVL Form 2, and he shall be allowed to vote. If the voter's Voter Registration Record is not in the book of voters, the Plebiscite Committee shall advise the voter to look for his name in the CVL Report 1-B of other precincts of his barangay.

    Even if a voter presents a Certificate of Registration/voter's ID card, if his name does not appear in the CVL Form 2 or his Voter Registration Record is not in the book of voters, he will **NOT** be allowed to vote.
(b) If the Plebiscite Committee is satisfied with his identity, the chairman shall announce the voter's name in a voice loud enough to be heard throughout the polling place;

    If such voter has not been challenged, or having been challenged, the question has been decided in his favor, the chairman shall ascertain that no fingernail of the voter is stained with indelible ink;

    If any of the fingernails of the voter is already stained, he shall not be given a ballot and such fact shall be entered in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.
(c) The chairman shall announce the serial number of the ballot to be given to the voter then enter the same in the corresponding space in the voting record at the back of the Voter Registration Record and in the CVL Form 2;
(d) The voter shall affix his signature or, in case of an illiterate or disabled voter, his thumbmark or any customary mark, in the corresponding space at the back of the Voter Registration Record. If his Voter Registration Record is not available, the voter shall sign or affix his thumbmark or any customary mark in the CVL Form 2;
(e) Thereafter, the chairman shall:
    1) authenticate the ballot by affixing his signature at the back of the ballot;
    2) instruct the voter on how to accomplish the ballot; and
    3) give to the voter the official ballot.

No person other than the chairman shall give the official ballot to the voter.

Sec. 31. Voting procedure. - Voting shall be in the following manner.

(a) The voter, upon receiving his folded ballot, shall, using a ballot secrecy folder, fill his ballot by writing in the proper space his vote on the plebiscite question.
(b) If the voter accidentally spoils or defaces a ballot in such a way that it cannot be lawfully used or the detachable coupon has been removed not in the presence of the Plebiscite Committee, the voter shall, without showing its content, return the ballot to the chairman who shall immediately write the word **"SPOILED"** at the back of the ballot and the serial number of the ballot in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

    Thereafter, the chairman shall note below the serial number of the ballot entered in the Voter Registration Record and in CVL Form 2 that said ballot is spoiled. The voter shall then personally drop the same in the compartment for spoiled ballots.

    The voter shall be issued another ballot after the chairman has announced the serial number of the second ballot and recorded the same in the corresponding spaces in the Voter Registration Record and in the CVL Form 2 which facts shall likewise be recorded in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

    A voter can replace his ballot only once.
(c) After accomplishing his ballot, the voter shall approach the chairman and return his ballot folded in the same manner as it was given to him.
(d) The chairman shall:
    1) require the voter to imprint his thumbmark on the ballot coupon and on his Voter Registration Record or in CVL Form 2 as the case may be;
    2) apply indelible ink in the voter's forefinger nail;

        If the voter refuses to have his forefinger nail stained, the chairman shall write the word "Spoiled" on the face of the ballot. The chairman shall then enter the serial number of the spoiled ballot in the Minutes and note below the serial number of the ballot entered in the Voter Registration Record and in CVL Form 2 that said ballot is spoiled. The chairman shall give the ballot to the voter, who shall in turn, drop the same into the compartment for spoiled ballot. The voter shall then be directed to leave the polling place.
    3) sign at the back of the Voter Registration Record or in CVL Form 2 as the case may be;
    4) detach the ballot coupon, drop the same in the compartment for spoiled ballots; and
    5) return the ballot to the voter who shall personally drop it into the ballot box compartment for valid ballots, then direct him to leave the polling place.

Sec. 32. Prohibition on voting. - It shall be unlawful for a voter to:

(a) Bring the ballot outside the polling place;
(b) Speak loudly with anyone while inside the polling place;
(c) Prepare his ballot, without using a ballot secrecy folder;
(d) Accomplish his ballot accompanied by another, except in the case of an illiterate or disabled voter;
(e) Erase any printing from the ballot or put any distinguishing mark thereon;
(f) Use any scheme to identify his vote;
(g) Intentionally tear or deface the ballot; and/or
(h) Exhibit the contents of the ballot to any person.

Sec. 33. Preparation of ballots for illiterate and disabled person. - A voter who is illiterate or physically unable to prepare the ballot, may be assisted in the preparation thereof by a relative within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity, or if he has none, by any person of his confidence who belongs to the same household, or any member of the Plebiscite Committee. All assistors must be of voting age.

In no case shall an assistor assist more than three times unless he is a member of the Plebiscite Committee.

The assistor shall prepare the ballot in the presence of the illiterate or disabled voter using the ballot secrecy folder. He shall bind himself in writing under oath by affixing his signature over his printed name in the appropriate space in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes that he will:

(a) accomplish the ballot strictly in accordance with the instruction of the voter; and
(b) not reveal the contents of the ballot prepared by him.

Republic of the Philippines

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS

Manila

PRESENT:

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PLEBISCITE TO RATIFY THE AMENDMENTS TO THE ORGANIC ACT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO.	BENIPAYO, Alfredo, L.,	Chairman
	TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.,	Commissioner
	JAVIER, Rufino S.B.,	Commissioner
	LANTION, Ralph C.,	Commissioner
	SADAIN, Mehol K.,	Commissioner
	BORRA, Resurreccion Z.,	Commissioner
	TUASON, Jr. Florentino A.,	Commissioner

x——————————————x Promulgated: 11 July 2001

RESOLUTION NO. 4502

The Commission on Elections, by virtue of the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 6734 as amended by Republic Act No. 9054 and other pertinent election laws, RESOLVED to promulgate, as it hereby promulgates, the following Rules and Regulations to govern the plebiscite to ratify the amendments to the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

ARTICLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Declaration of policy. - The plebiscite to ratify the amendments to the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is a non-partisan political activity.

Sec. 2. Date and places of plebiscite. - The plebiscite shall be held on August 14, 2001, in the following places:

Region	*Province*	*City*
IV	Palawan	Puerto Princesa City
IX	Basilan	Isabela City
	Tawi-Tawi	
	Zamboanga del Norte	Dapitan City
		Dipolog City
	Zamboanga del Sur	Zamboanga City
		Pagadian City
	Zamboanga Sibugay	
	Sulu	
XI	Davao del Sur	Digos City
	South Cotabato	Gen. Santos City
		Koronadal City
	Sarangani	
XII	North Cotabato	Kidapawan City
	Lanao del Norte	Iligan City
	Lanao del Sur	Marawi City
	Sultan Kudarat	Tacurong City
	Maguindanao	Cotabato City

Sec. 3. Plebiscite and campaign periods. - The plebiscite period shall be for sixty (60) days commencing on June 30, 2001 and ending on August 29, 2001.

The campaign period shall commence forty-five (45) days before the plebiscite or on June 30, 2001 and end at midnight of August 12, 2001.

Campaigning shall not be allowed on August 13, 2001 and on August 14, 2001.

ARTICLE II
CAMPAIGN AND PROPAGANDA MATERIALS

Sec. 4. Supervision by the Commission. - The Commission on Elections (Commission) shall supervise the campaign, the distribution of propaganda materials and the use and employment of press, radio and television facilities so as to give all proponents and oppositors, whether as individuals or as groups, equal opportunity under equal circumstances to make known their stand on the issues within the limits allowed by law.

Sec. 5. Assembly meeting or "pulong-pulong". - (a) Every barangay within the plebiscite areas shall hold at least one assembly meeting or "pulong-pulong" during the campaign period under the supervision of the Election Officer to enlighten the voters on the amendments to the Organic Act to be voted upon in the plebiscite.

If one meeting will not be sufficient, the barangay officials may hold as many meetings or "pulong-pulong" as may be adequate for the purpose herein stated.

All Provincial Election Supervisors shall see to it that this provision is complied with, within their respective areas of supervision.

(b) The punong barangay or his duly authorized representative shall:

1. Act as presiding officer or moderator during the meeting;
2. See to it that the discussions and debates are free and constructive and that speakers for both the affirmative and negative sides of the questions are given equal opportunity and time to expound on their views;
3. Invite speakers or resource persons from both private and public sectors, who are knowledgeable on the plebiscite issues for the enlightenment of the registered voters in the barangay. Any barangay member shall be free to ask questions and voice his opinion on any side of the plebiscite question; and
4. Certify in writing that a "pulong-pulong" in the barangay has been held. It shall state the date and place of the meeting, the number of persons who attended and the names of resource speakers, if any. Said certification shall be submitted to the Election Officer.

The Election Officer shall report to the Commission by telegram, through the Education and Information Department, within three days after the campaign period, the number of "pulong-pulong" held in every barangay in his jurisdiction.

Sec. 6. Applicability of COMELEC Resolution No. 3636. – The provisions of Comelec Resolution No. 3636 implementing Republic Act No. 9006, otherwise known as Fair Election Act, promulgated on March 1, 2001 shall, insofar as applicable, apply.

Sec. 7. Right of government officials and employees to express opinion for or against the ratification. - All government officials and employees, as well as those in government-owned or controlled corporations with original charters, who are residing or holding office in the provinces or cities where the plebiscite shall be held, may publicly express their opinion on any of the issues related to the plebiscite during the campaign period.

Sec. 8. Prohibition on Comelec officials, employees and its deputies. - In order to maintain the independent and non-partisan status of the Commission, its Chairman, Commissioners, officials, employees and deputies are prohibited from publicly expressing their views and opinion on, and from campaigning for or against, the ratification of the amendments to the Organic Act.

ARTICLE III
PRECINCTS AND POLLING PLACES

Sec. 9. Precincts and polling places. - For purposes of the August 14, 2001 plebiscite, the precincts established and the grouping scheme as adopted in the May 14, 2001 National and Local elections shall be used.

ARTICLE IV
PLEBISCITE COMMITTEE

Sec. 10. Plebiscite committee. - There shall be a Plebiscite Committee composed of three (3) members who must be public school teachers and who shall conduct the plebiscite in the polling place for each precinct or grouped precincts. The district supervisor concerned shall submit to the Election Officer, the list of teachers recommended as members of the Plebiscite Committee with the plantilla of positions as supporting document to show the rank of each recommendee. The highest-ranking teacher shall be appointed as chairman.

In case there are not enough public school teachers, teachers in private schools, employees in the civil service, or other citizens of known probity and competence, who are registered voters of the province/city may be appointed for plebiscite duty in the order given.

The Commission shall constitute, through the Election Officers, the Plebiscite Committees not later than July 14, 2001.

Sec. 11. Qualifications of members of the plebiscite committee. - The chairman and members of the Plebiscite Committee or their substitutes must:

(a) Be of good moral character and of irreproachable reputation;
(b) Have never been convicted of any election offense or of any other crime punishable by more than six (6) months of imprisonment;
(c) Have no pending information for any election offense against them; and
(d) Know how to read and write English or the local dialect.

Sec. 12. Disqualifications. - No person shall serve as chairman or member of a Plebiscite Committee if he is related within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity to any member of the same committee.

Sec. 13. Powers and duties of the plebiscite committee. - The Plebiscite Committee shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) Supervise and conduct the voting in the polling place on August 14, 2001;
(b) Count the votes and thereafter prepare the plebiscite returns;
(c) Deliver the book/s of voters and lists of voters to the Election Officer for custody and safekeeping not later than August 16, 2001;
(d) Furnish watchers signed certificates of votes upon written request; and
(e) Act as deputies of the Commission in the supervision and control of the plebiscite in the polling places wherein they are assigned to ensure the holding of free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible plebiscite.

The Plebiscite Committee shall have full authority to maintain order within the polling place and its premises, to keep access thereto open and unobstructed, and to enforce obedience to its lawful orders.

If any person shall refuse to obey lawful orders of the Plebiscite Committee or shall conduct himself in a disorderly manner in its presence or within its hearing and thereby interrupts or disturbs its proceedings, the Plebiscite Committee may issue an order in writing directing any peace officer to take such person into custody until the adjournment of the meeting, but such order shall not be executed as to [illegible] any peace officer to whom it may be delivered, but if none is present, by any other person deputized by the Committee in writing; and

(f) Perform such other functions/duties as may be prescribed by the Commission.

Sec. 14. Temporary designation of members of the plebiscite committee. - If at the time the Plebiscite Committee must meet, all the positions in the committee are vacant, or if not one of the appointed members shall appear, the watchers present may, in writing, designate non-partisan registered voters of the precinct to act in the place of the absent members until they shall appear or the vacancies are filled. Such appointments and the names of the appointees shall be recorded in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

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ARTICLE V
LISTS OF VOTERS AND BOOK OF VOTERS

Sec. 17. Lists of Voters. - The Election Officer shall print two (2) copies of the revised CVL Form 2 and four (4) copies of CVL Report 1-B, all of which shall be certified by the Election Registration Board. The two copies of CVL Form 2 and two (2) copies of CVL Report 1-B shall be given to the Plebiscite Committees for use on plebiscite day. The other two (2) copies of CVL Report 1-B shall be distributed as follows:

(a) One copy for posting at the office of the Election Officer; and
(b) One copy for posting at the bulletin board of the municipal hall;

Sec. 18. Posting of the CVL. - The Election Officer shall post the CVL Report 1-B on July 15, 2001 in his office and in the bulletin boards of the municipal/city hall.

The Plebiscite Committee shall post one (1) copy of CVL Report 1-B at the polling place on plebiscite day before the opening of the polls.

Sec. 19. Notification; inspection; verification and sealing of the book of voters. - The Election Registration Boards shall, starting July 10, 2001 until July 14, 2001, notify representatives of proponents and oppositors and the Plebiscite Committees to inspect and verify the completeness of the Voter Registration Records of each precinct compiled in the books of voters.

The Plebiscite Committees and the representatives of proponents and oppositors shall, starting July 15, 2001 until July 30, 2001, inspect, verify and certify as to the completeness of the Voter Registration Records in the precinct book of voters. The Election Registration Board shall seal the books of voters in the presence of the representatives of the proponents and oppositors and the Plebiscite Committees. All books of voters must be sealed not later than July 30, 2001 and shall not be available for examination by the public. They shall remain in the custody of the Election Officer who shall deliver the same to the chairmen of the Plebiscite Committees when they secure the official ballots and other paraphernalia on plebiscite day.

ARTICLE VI
PLEBISCITE FORMS AND SUPPLIES

Sec. 20. Forms and supplies. - The Plebiscite Committee shall be provided with the following documents, forms and supplies for use on plebiscite day:

FORMS	TITLE	RATE OF DISTRIBUTION
CEF NO. 3	Poster Indicating Precinct Number	1 piece
CEF NO. 5 & 5A	Appointment of Plebiscite Committee	9 pieces
CEF NO. 6	Plebiscite Official Ballots	1 piece per reg. voter plus 3 per grouped precinct
CEF NO. 9	Plebiscite Returns	1 set of 4 copies
CEF NO. 10	Tally Board	1 piece
CEF NO. 11	Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes	1 set of 2 copies
CEF NO. 12	Paper Seals	16 pieces
CEF NO.12-A	Paper Seal for Book of Voters	1 piece
CEF No. 13	Certificate of Votes for Watcher	10 sheets
CEF NO. 14	Certificate of Receipt of Plebiscite Ballots, Other Forms and Supplies by Plebiscite Committee	3 pieces
CEF NO. 27-A	Official Receipt of Plebiscite Returns for PBC	2 pieces
SPECIAL ENVELOPES		
CEF NO. 15	Envelope for Counted Official Ballots	1 piece
CEF NO. 16	Envelope for Excess/Marked/Spoiled/Unused ballots	1 piece
CEF NO. 17-1	Envelope for Plebiscite Returns copy for the PBC/CBC	1 piece
CEF NO. 17-B-1	Envelope for Plebiscite Returns copy for the COMELEC	1 piece
CEF NO. 17-C-1	Envelope for Plebiscite Returns copy for the Citizens Arm	1 piece
CEF NO. 17-F-1	Envelope for Plebiscite Returns copy for the Ballot Box	1 piece
CEF NO. 18 & 18-A	Envelope for Minutes of Voting & Counting of Votes	2 pieces
CEF NO. 19	Envelope for Key to Ballot Box - EO	1 piece
CEF NO. 28	Envelope for Plebiscite Official Ballots	1 piece
OTHER FORMS		
Election Watchers I.D. In Polling Place		2 pieces
General Instructions for Plebiscite Committee on Plebiscite Day		3 copies
CANVASSING FORMS		
CEF NO. 26	Certificate of Canvass	1 set of 5 copies
CEF NO. 26-A	Statement of Votes by Precinct	1 set of 3 copies
CEF NO. 26-A	Statement of Votes by Province/City/Municipality	1 set of 3 copies
CEF NO. 26-B, B-1 to B-4	Envelope for CEF 26 & CEF 26-A	1 set of 5 copies

SUPPLIES

ITEMS	RATE OF DISTRIBUTION
Ballot Box	1 piece
Padlocks with Key	3 pieces
Fixed Length Seal	2 pieces
Ballpen	13 pieces
Bond Paper Long	30 sheets
Thumbprint Taker	2 pieces
Carbon Paper	5 sheets
Rubber Band	6 pieces
Indelible Stain Ink	2 bottles
Ballot Secrecy Folder	10 pieces

Sec. 21. Official plebiscite ballot. - The official plebiscite ballots shall:

(a) be of uniform size in the shape of a strip with stub and detachable coupon and printed on a paper with watermarks or other marks which will readily distinguish the ballot paper from ordinary paper.
(b) bear at the top on the middle portion thereof, the coat of arms of the Republic of the Philippines, the words "Official Ballot", the name of the province/city/municipality where the plebiscite is held, the date of the plebiscite, and the following notice: "Fill out this ballot secretly inside the voting booth. Do not put any distinctive mark on any part of this ballot.";
(c) have the following questions printed:
    1) For the voters in the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi:
    DO YOU VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE AMENDMENTS TO REPUBLIC ACT 6734, THE ORGANIC ACT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO, AS PROPOSED UNDER THIS ORGANIC ACT, WHICH INCLUDES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE EXPANSION OF THE AREA OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION?
    2) For the voters in the provinces of Basilan, Cotabato, Davao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Palawan, Sarangani, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay and in the cities of Cotabato, Dapitan, Digos, Dipolog, Koronadal, Tacurong, General Santos, Iligan, Kidapawan, Marawi, Pagadian, Puerto Princesa, Zamboanga and Isabela:
    DO YOU VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE INCLUSION OF YOUR PROVINCE OR CITY IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO?

    A Pilipino translation of the above questions shall be printed on the official ballots.

    In areas where Arabic is of general use, the question to be voted for shall be printed in Arabic in addition to and immediately below the English version.
(d) be distributed at the rate of one ballot for each registered voter plus three (3) per precinct

Sec. 22. Safeguards. In the delivery of the official plebiscite ballots and other forms and documents to the different Plebiscite Committees, the city/municipal treasurer and the Election Officer shall adopt such measures as may be necessary to protect and ensure their integrity.

ARTICLE VII
CASTING OF VOTES

Sec. 23. Who may vote. - All registered voters as of May 14, 2001 elections may vote in the plebiscite.

Sec. 24. Voting hours. - The casting of votes shall start promptly at seven o'clock in the morning on plebiscite day and shall end at three o'clock in the afternoon, except when there are voters present within thirty meters in front of the polling place who have not yet cast their votes, in which case the voting shall continue but only to allow said voters to cast their votes without interruption. The poll clerk shall, without delay, prepare a complete list containing the names of said voters consecutively numbered, and the voters so listed shall be called to vote by announcing each name repeatedly three times in the order in which they are listed. Any voter in the list who is not present when his name is called out shall not be permitted to vote.

Sec. 25. Preliminaries to the voting. - (a) The Plebiscite Committee shall meet at the polling place at six thirty o'clock in the morning of plebiscite day, bringing with them the forms and supplies which they received from the Election Officer, municipal treasurer or such other official as may be designated by the Commission;

(b) The members of the Plebiscite Committee shall each keep one (1) of the three (3) keys to the padlocks of the ballot box during the voting;
(c) The Plebiscite Committee shall post all required instructions, notices and lists;
(d) The chairman shall open the ballot box, empty its compartments and exhibit them to all those present, then lock its interior cover with three (3) padlocks; and
(e) The chairman shall forthwith show to the public and the watchers present the package of official ballots and the sealed book of voters and thereafter break the seals. Such fact, together with the total number of pads and the serial numbers of the ballots found in the package, shall be entered in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

Sec. 26. Minutes of voting and counting of votes. - The Plebiscite Committee shall accomplish in two (2) copies the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes entering therein all data required as they become available and all acts as they occur. Copies of the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes shall be signed by the members of the Plebiscite Committee and sealed in separate envelopes and distributed as follows:

(a) the original, to the Election Officer who shall in turn transmit the same to the Records and Statistics Division of the ERSD, COMELEC, Manila; and
(b) the second copy to be deposited inside the compartment of the ballot box for valid ballots.

Sec. 27. Persons allowed inside the polling place. - During the voting, only the following persons shall be allowed inside the polling place:

(a) Members of the Plebiscite Committee;
(b) Watchers;
(c) Representatives of the Commission;
(d) Voters casting their votes;
(e) Voters waiting for their turn to cast their votes and whose number shall not exceed ten (10) at any one time; and
(f) Other persons who may be specifically authorized by the Commission.

The watchers shall stay only in the space reserved for them, it being illegal for them to enter places reserved for the voters or for the Plebiscite Committee or to mingle and talk with the voters within the polling place.

Sec. 28. Persons not allowed in and around the polling place. - The following persons are not allowed to enter any polling place during the voting, except to vote, in which case they shall immediately leave the polling place after the voting:

(a) any officer or member of the AFP or the Philippine National Police (PNP);
(b) any peace officer, or any armed person belonging to any extra-legal police agency, special forces, strike forces;
(c) Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGUs) and other similar forces or para-military forces, including security guards, special policemen.
(d) barangay officials, including barangay tanods; and
(e) all other kinds of armed or unarmed extra-legal police officers.

In case of policemen or peace officers, they shall stay outside the polling place but within the radius of thirty (30) meters to be easily called by the Plebiscite Committee at any time. However, they may enter the polling place, when:

(a) there is an actual disturbance of the peace and order in the polling place; and
(b) they are ordered in writing by a majority vote of the Plebiscite Committee for their protection and that of the voters or that of the plebiscite documents and paraphernalia. Such orders shall be entered in the Minutes.

In no case shall they hold any conversation with any voter or disturb, prevent or obstruct in any manner the free access of the voters to the polling place.

Sec. 29. Order of voting. - The voters shall fall in line in the order of their arrival in the polling place and cast their votes in the same order. They shall not crowd around the table of the Plebiscite Committee and shall immediately depart after having voted.

Sec. 30. Manner of obtaining ballots. –

(a) The voter shall approach the chairman and give his name and address; The chairman shall check the voter's name from CVL Form 2. If his name is in CVL Form 2, he shall be allowed to vote. If it does not appear therein, the chairman shall refer to the book of voters. If the voter's Voter Registration Record is in the book of voters, his name shall be added in the CVL Form 2, and he shall be allowed to vote. If the voter's Voter Registration Record is not in the book of voters, the Plebiscite Committee shall advise the voter to look for his name in the CVL Report 1-B of other precincts of his barangay.

    Even if a voter presents a Certificate of Registration/voter's ID card, if his name does not appear in the CVL Form 2 or his Voter Registration Record is not in the book of voters, he will **NOT** be allowed to vote.
(b) If the Plebiscite Committee is satisfied with his identity, the chairman shall announce the voter's name in a voice loud enough to be heard throughout the polling place;

    If such voter has not been challenged, or having been challenged, the question has been decided in his favor, the chairman shall ascertain that no fingernail of the voter is stained with indelible ink;

    If any of the fingernails of the voter is already stained, he shall not be given a ballot and such fact shall be entered in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.
(c) The chairman shall announce the serial number of the ballot to be given to the voter then enter the same in the corresponding space in the voting record at the back of the Voter Registration Record and in the CVL Form 2;
(d) The voter shall affix his signature or, in case of an illiterate or disabled voter, his thumbmark or any customary mark, in the corresponding space at the back of the Voter Registration Record. If his Voter Registration Record is not available, the voter shall sign or affix his thumbmark or any customary mark in the CVL Form 2;
(e) Thereafter, the chairman shall:
    1) authenticate the ballot by affixing his signature at the back of the ballot;
    2) instruct the voter on how to accomplish the ballot; and
    3) give to the voter the official ballot.

No person other than the chairman shall give the official ballot to the voter.

Sec. 31. Voting procedure. - Voting shall be in the following manner.

(a) The voter, upon receiving his folded ballot, shall, using a ballot secrecy folder, fill his ballot by writing in the proper space his vote on the plebiscite question.
(b) If the voter accidentally spoils or defaces a ballot in such a way that it cannot be lawfully used or the detachable coupon has been removed not in the presence of the Plebiscite Committee, the voter shall, without showing its content, return the ballot to the chairman who shall immediately write the word **"SPOILED"** at the back of the ballot and the serial number of the ballot in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

    Thereafter, the chairman shall note below the serial number of the ballot entered in the Voter Registration Record and in CVL Form 2 that said ballot is spoiled. The voter shall then personally drop the same in the compartment for spoiled ballots.

    The voter shall be issued another ballot after the chairman has announced the serial number of the second ballot and recorded the same in the corresponding spaces in the Voter Registration Record and in the CVL Form 2 which facts shall likewise be recorded in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

    A voter can replace his ballot only once.
(c) After accomplishing his ballot, the voter shall approach the chairman and return his ballot folded in the same manner as it was given to him.
(d) The chairman shall:
    1) require the voter to imprint his thumbmark on the ballot coupon and on his Voter Registration Record or in CVL Form 2 as the case may be;
    2) apply indelible ink in the voter's forefinger nail;

        If the voter refuses to have his forefinger nail stained, the chairman shall write the word "Spoiled" on the face of the ballot. The chairman shall then enter the serial number of the spoiled ballot in the Minutes and note below the serial number of the ballot entered in the Voter Registration Record and in CVL Form 2 that said ballot is spoiled. The chairman shall give the ballot to the voter, who shall in turn, drop the same into the compartment for spoiled ballot. The voter shall then be directed to leave the polling place.
    3) sign at the back of the Voter Registration Record or in CVL Form 2 as the case may be;
    4) detach the ballot coupon, drop the same in the compartment for spoiled ballots; and
    5) return the ballot to the voter who shall personally drop it into the ballot box compartment for valid ballots, then direct him to leave the polling place.

Sec. 32. Prohibition on voting. - It shall be unlawful for a voter to:

(a) Bring the ballot outside the polling place;
(b) Speak loudly with anyone while inside the polling place;
(c) Prepare his ballot, without using a ballot secrecy folder;
(d) Accomplish his ballot accompanied by another, except in the case of an illiterate or disabled voter;
(e) Erase any printing from the ballot or put any distinguishing mark thereon;
(f) Use any scheme to identify his vote;
(g) Intentionally tear or deface the ballot; and/or
(h) Exhibit the contents of the ballot to any person.

Sec. 33. Preparation of ballots for illiterate and disabled person. - A voter who is illiterate or physically unable to prepare the ballot, may be assisted in the preparation thereof by a relative within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity, or if he has none, by any person of his confidence who belongs to the same household, or any member of the Plebiscite Committee. All assistors must be of voting age.

In no case shall an assistor assist more than three times unless he is a member of the Plebiscite Committee.

The assistor shall prepare the ballot in the presence of the illiterate or disabled voter using the ballot secrecy folder. He shall bind himself in writing under oath by affixing his signature over his printed name in the appropriate space in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes that he will:

(a) accomplish the ballot strictly in accordance with the instruction of the voter; and
(b) not reveal the contents of the ballot prepared by him.

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No voter shall be allowed to vote as illiterate or physically disabled unless such fact is indicated in his Voter Registration Record or the fact of his disability is apparent from his physical condition.

Sec. 34. Challenge of illegal voters. - Any voter or watcher may challenge any person presenting himself to vote for:

(a) not being registered;
(b) using the name of another; or
(c) suffering from existing disqualification

Challenges shall be in writing submitted to the Plebiscite Committee.

The Plebiscite Committee shall satisfy itself as to whether or not there is valid basis for the challenge by requiring proof relative to the registration, identity or qualification of the voter.

Sec. 35. Challenge based on certain illegal acts. - Any voter or watcher may challenge any person presenting himself to vote on the ground that the challenged person has:

(a) received or expects to receive, has paid, offered or promised to pay, has contributed, offered or promised to contribute money or anything of value as consideration for his vote or for the vote of another;
(b) made a bet or is interested directly or indirectly in the bet which depends upon the result of the plebiscite.

The challenged person shall take an oath before the Plebiscite Committee that he has not committed any of the acts alleged. Upon the taking of such oath, the challenge shall be dismissed and the voter shall be allowed to vote. However, in case he refuses to take such oath, the challenge shall be sustained and he shall not be allowed to vote.

Sec. 36. Record of challenges and oaths. - The poll clerk shall record in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes all challenges, protests, oaths and resolutions of the Plebiscite Committee in each case.

Sec. 37. Disposition of unused ballots at the close of the voting hours. - At the close of voting, all unused ballots shall be torn in half lengthwise by the Chairman in the presence of the other members of the Plebiscite Committee and the watchers. One half of the torn ballots shall be placed inside the envelope for unused ballots, which shall be sealed and submitted to the Election Officer for safekeeping. It shall remain sealed unless the Commission orders otherwise. The other half of the torn ballots shall be placed in the corresponding envelope and deposited inside the ballot box compartment for spoiled ballots. Such fact shall be entered in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

ARTICLE VIII
COUNTING OF VOTES

Sec. 38. Counting to be public and without interruption. - As soon as the voting is finished, the Plebiscite Committee shall publicly count in the polling place the votes cast and ascertain the results. The Plebiscite Committee shall not adjourn or postpone or delay the count until it has been fully completed, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission.

Sec. 39. Transfer of venue of counting. - If on account of force majeure, rebellion, violence, terrorism, disorder or similar causes or imminent danger thereof, the counting of votes cannot be made in the polling place designated by the Commission for the plebiscite, counting may be transferred to the nearest safe barangay or school building in the municipality upon unanimous approval of the members of the Plebiscite Committee and with the concurrence of the majority of the watchers present.

Such fact shall be recorded in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes. The members of the Plebiscite Committee and watchers present shall manifest their approval and concurrence by affixing their signatures in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

The Plebiscite Committee shall ensure the safety and integrity of the election documents and paraphernalia by requiring the PNP/AFP in the area to provide adequate security and transport facilities to the members of the Plebiscite Committee and the election documents and paraphernalia during transfer and counting of votes.

The Plebiscite Committee shall post a notice at a conspicuous place outside the polling place indicating the place where the counting of votes is transferred.

Sec. 40. Preliminaries to the counting of votes. - (a) The chairman, the poll clerk and the third member shall assume such positions as to provide the watchers and the public as may be conveniently accommodated in the polling place, an unimpeded view of the ballots being read by the chairman and of the plebiscite returns and the tally board being simultaneously accomplished by the poll clerk and the third member respectively. However, the watchers and the public shall not be allowed to touch any of these plebiscite documents. The table to be used by the Plebiscite Committee shall be cleared of all unnecessary writing paraphernalia. Any violation of this requirement shall constitute an election offense punishable under Sections 263 and 264 of the Omnibus Election Code.

(b) The Plebiscite Committee shall open the ballot box, take out the ballots from the compartment for valid ballots and examine them using the following guidelines:

1. Ballots folded together. - Without unfolding the ballots or exposing their contents, the Plebiscite Committee shall ascertain that each fold consists of a single ballot.

   If in the course of the examination, ballots are found folded together before they were deposited in the ballot box, they shall be placed in the envelope for excess ballots.
2. Excess ballots. – The Plebiscite Committee shall then count the ballots and compare the number of ballots with the number of voters who actually voted.

   If there are excess ballots, all of the ballots shall be returned to the compartment and thoroughly mixed therein. The poll clerk, without looking at the contents of the ballots and with his back to the box, shall publicly draw out as many ballots as may be equal to the excess and place them in the proper envelope. They shall not be read during the counting of votes.
3. Ballots with detachable coupons. - In case ballots with their detachable coupons still attached should be found, such coupons shall be removed and deposited in the compartment for spoiled ballots. The ballots shall be included in the pile of valid ballots.
4. Ballots with the word "spoiled". – If ballots with the word "spoiled" should be found, they shall be placed in the compartment for spoiled ballots.

   The ballots deposited in the compartment for spoiled ballots shall be presumed to be spoiled, whether or not they contain such notation.

   But if a valid ballot was erroneously deposited in the compartment for spoiled ballots during the voting, the Plebiscite Committee shall open said compartment after voting and before counting for the sole purpose of drawing out the ballot erroneously deposited therein. Such fact shall be recorded in the Minutes. The valid ballots so withdrawn shall be mixed with the other valid ballots.
5. Marked ballots. - The Plebiscite Committee shall unfold the ballots and determine whether there are any marked ballots.

   If any should be found, the Chairman shall write the word "marked" at the back of the ballots, and place the same in the envelope for marked ballots. Said ballots shall not be read during the counting of votes. A majority vote of the Plebiscite Committee shall be sufficient to resolve the question of whether a ballot is marked or not.

(c) The valid ballots shall then be separated in piles of one hundred ballots, each held together by a rubber band.

(d) The poll clerk shall take hold of the plebiscite returns and the third member shall tack the tally board on the blackboard or any available space within the plain view of the Plebiscite Committee, watchers and the public.

Sec. 41. Appreciation of ballots. - The provisions of Sec. 211 of the Omnibus Election Code whenever applicable, shall govern the appreciation of ballots. Any question on the appreciation of ballots shall be decided by majority vote of the Plebiscite Committee.

No watcher or any other person inside the polling place shall be allowed to participate in the appreciation of ballots except to file a protest, which shall be recorded in the Minutes of Voting and Counting of Votes.

Sec. 42. Manner of counting of votes. - The counting of votes shall proceed as follows:

(a) The chairman takes the ballots of the first pile one by one and reads the votes cast;
(b) The poll clerk and the third member simultaneously record in the plebiscite returns and tally board the votes read. Each vote shall be recorded by a vertical line at the appropriate box in the plebiscite returns and in the tally board, except every fifth vote which shall be recorded by a diagonal line crossing the previous four vertical lines;
(c) After finishing the first pile of ballots, the Plebiscite Committee shall count the affirmative and negative votes recorded, and indicate on the plebiscite returns and on the tally board the sub-totals thereof, which shall be encircled.
(d) In case of discrepancy, a recount shall be made. The ballots shall again be grouped together as before the reading.
(e) Thereafter, the same procedure shall be followed with the second and subsequent piles of ballots; and
(f) After all the ballots for the precinct have been counted, the Plebiscite Committee shall:
    1. sum up the sub-totals of recorded Affirmative and Negative Votes and enter the grand total in the appropriate column of the plebiscite returns and tally board;
    2. see to it that the entries in the first copy of the plebiscite returns are clearly impressed and reflected properly in the three other copies;
    3. sign the certification portion at the bottom of the plebiscite returns and tally board; and
    4. place the counted official ballots in the envelope for counted ballots, which shall be closed with a serially numbered paper seal, signed and deposited in the compartment for valid ballots. The accomplished tally board, certified by the Plebiscite Committee, shall also be deposited in the compartment for valid ballots.

Sec. 43. Announcement of results. – Upon completion and certification of the plebiscite returns, the chairman shall publicly announce the total number of Affirmative and Negative votes cast and counted in the precinct.

Sec. 44. Distribution of plebiscite returns. – The Plebiscite Committee shall, in the presence of the watchers when available:

(a) Fold and seal each copy of the plebiscite returns with a serially numbered paper seal; and
(b) Place the plebiscite returns inside the corresponding envelope and seal the same with a serially numbered paper seal for distribution as follows:
    1) the original copy for the Provincial Board of Canvassers which shall be delivered to the Election Officer who in turn shall place all the plebiscite returns for his municipality in a separate ballot box, which shall be locked and personally delivered together with the key to the chairman of the Provincial Board of Canvassers immediately after receipt of the returns from the different precincts in the municipality.

       If within six hours of the first delivery, not all of the plebiscite returns from the precincts of the city of municipality have been submitted, the Election Officer shall designate another personnel in his office who is trustworthy to receive and deliver the remaining copies of the plebiscite returns to the office of the Provincial Election Supervisor.

       In all instances, the Election Officer and the election assistant shall observe and comply with the above procedure of delivering said copies of the plebiscite returns at interval of six hours when possible until all the plebiscite returns in his jurisdiction are delivered to the Provincial Board of Canvassers at the earliest possible time but not later than August 15, 2001.
    2) The second copy, to the Election Officer;
    3) The third copy, to the accredited citizens arm; and
    4) The fourth copy, to the ballot box.

Sec. 45. Certificate of votes. - Before leaving the precinct, it shall be the duty of the Plebiscite Committee to issue a certificate on the number of Affirmative and Negative votes to the watchers upon the latter's request. All the members of the Plebiscite Committee shall sign the certificate.

Sec. 46. Alterations and corrections in the plebiscite returns. - Any correction or alteration made in the plebiscite returns by the Plebiscite Committee before the announcement of the results of the plebiscite in the precinct, shall be duly initialed by all the members thereof.

After the announcement of the results of the plebiscite in the precinct has been made, the Plebiscite Committee shall not make any alteration or amendment in any of the copies of the plebiscite returns, unless so ordered by the Commission upon petition of all the members of the Plebiscite Committee within five days from the date of the plebiscite or twenty-four hours from the time a copy of the plebiscite returns is opened by the board of canvassers, whichever is earlier. The petition shall be accompanied by proof of service upon the representatives of the proponent and oppositor. If the results of the plebiscite would not be affected by said correction and none of the representatives of the proponent and oppositor objects thereto, the Commission, upon being satisfied of the veracity of the petition and of the error alleged therein, shall order the Plebiscite Committee to make the proper correction of the plebiscite returns. Otherwise, the Commission shall proceed summarily to hear the petition. If it finds the petition meritorious and there are no evidence or signs indicating that the identity and integrity of the ballot box have been violated, the Commission shall order the opening of the ballot box. After satisfying itself that the integrity of the ballots therein has also been duly preserved the Commission shall order the recounting of votes affected and the proper corrections made on the plebiscite returns, unless the correction sought is such that it can be made without the need of opening the ballot box.

Sec. 47. Delivery of the ballot box, other supplies and documents, preservation of voting records, ballot boxes and their keys, and their disposition. - The provisions of Section 217, 218 and 219 of the Omnibus Election Code on delivery of ballot boxes, keys and election supplies and documents, preservation of the voting records and ballot boxes, and their keys and disposition of their contents shall apply to the plebiscite governed by this Resolution.

Sec. 47-A. Submission of voting data. – The Municipal Election Officer shall submit to the Provincial Board of Canvassers the data on registered voters and those who actually voted using the project of precincts in the municipalities involved. On the other hand, the City Election officer shall submit the same data to the City Board of Canvassers.

ARTICLE IX
CANVASS OF VOTES BY THE BOARDS OF CANVASSERS

Sec. 48. Boards of canvassers. - There is hereby created a Provincial Board of Canvassers in each province and a City Board of Canvassers in each city to canvass the plebiscite returns.

The Provincial Board of Canvassers shall be composed of the: (a) Provincial Election Supervisor, as chairman, (b) Provincial Prosecutor, and (c) Division Superintendent of Schools, as members.

The City Board of Canvassers shall be composed of the: (a) City Election Officer, as chairman, (b) City Prosecutor and (c) the City Superintendent of Schools, as members.

Sec. 49. Support units; functions. - The Boards of Canvassers are authorized to create the following support units to assist in the canvass:

1. Reception and Custody Unit
2. Tabulation and Canvassing Unit
3. Audit and Verification Unit

Sec. 50. Supervision and control over the Board. - The Commission shall have direct control and supervision over the Boards of Canvassers and may *motu proprio* relieve at any time any member thereof for cause and may substitute him with another.

Sec. 51. Absence of a regular member of the Board. - In case of absence of a regular member in the Boards of Canvassers, the members present shall first verify whether or not notice stating the date, time and place of canvassing has been duly served on the absent regular member.

In the absence of such notice, one shall be immediately sent to the absent board member. If the latter cannot be located, or his whereabouts are unknown, he shall then be substituted. These facts shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Board. As soon as the absent member appears, the substitute member shall relinquish his seat to the regular board member.

Sec. 52. Incapacitated regular member of the Board. - In case of sickness or serious injury of the regular board member, a sworn medical certificate shall be required attesting to the incapacity of said regular board member. Upon submission of the medical certificate, a substitute shall be appointed. Said certificate shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Board.

Sec. 53. Substitution of chairman and members of the Board. - In case of non-availability, absence, disqualification due to relationship, or incapacity for any cause by the chairman, the Commission shall appoint a substitute. With respect to the other members of the board, the Commission shall appoint as substitute the following in the order named: the provincial auditor, the register of deeds, the clerk of court nominated by the executive judge of the regional trial court, and other available appointive provincial official in the case of the Provincial Board of Canvassers and the officials in the city corresponding to those enumerated, in the case of the City Board of Canvassers.

Sec. 54. Prohibition against leaving official station. - During the period beginning August 9, 2001 until the completion of the canvass, no member or substitute member of the Board shall be transferred, assigned or detailed outside of his official station nor shall he leave his station without prior authority of the Commission.

Sec. 55. Secretary of the Board. - The division or city superintendent of schools, as the case may be, shall act as secretary of the Board unless otherwise ordered by the Commission. He shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Board.

Sec. 56. Convening of the Board. - The Board shall meet at 6:00 P.M. on plebiscite day and immediately proceed to canvass the plebiscite returns submitted to it.

Sec. 57. Notice of canvass. - The chairman of the Board shall, not later than August 9, 2001, notify in writing his members of the time and place of the canvassing which shall be held in the session hall of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan or the Sangguniang Panlungsod, as the case may be. He shall also send similar notices to the representatives of the proponent and oppositor, the citizens arm of the Commission, as well as other civic, religious, professional, business service, youth and similar organizations which are allowed to appoint watchers for purposes of the plebiscite. Each of the representatives of the proponent and oppositor and citizens arm shall be entitled to two watchers who shall serve alternately.

Notice of the date, time and place of the canvass shall be posted in conspicuous places in the building where the canvass will be held one week before plebiscite day.

Sec. 58. Quorum. - A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; a majority vote of all the members thereof shall be necessary to render a decision.

Sec. 59. Watchers; right and duties. - Representatives of the proponent and oppositor, the citizens arm of the Commission, if any, and other groups or organizations authorized to appoint watchers during the plebiscite and during the canvassing may appoint watchers. A person who is not a registered voter of the city or municipality, who is of questionable reputation, or who has been convicted of an election offense or any other crime shall not be appointed as watcher.

The watchers shall have the right to:

(a) be present at, and take note of, all the proceedings;
(b) read the plebiscite returns without touching them; and
(c) file a protest against any irregularity noted in the plebiscite returns or in the proceedings and obtain the resolution thereon in writing.

The watchers shall not be allowed to participate in the deliberation of the Board.

Sec. 60. Canvassing Procedures. - The Board is enjoined to observe the following procedures:

1. It shall meet promptly at 6:00 o'clock in the evening of plebiscite day to receive from the Election Officers, through the Reception and Custody Unit, the plebiscite returns of a municipality contained in ballot box(es);
2. Upon receipt of the ballot boxes, the Reception and Custody Unit shall, one by one:
   a) log the condition and serial numbers of the ballot box and metal seal;
   b) open the ballot box and log the condition and serial number of the inner metal seal;
   c) retrieve the envelopes containing the Plebiscite Returns, log the condition and serial numbers of the paper seal and envelope and the corresponding precinct number; and
   d) return the envelopes containing the Plebiscite Returns inside the ballot box, close and lock the same with padlocks and forward it to the Board.
3. The Secretary of the Board shall record in the Minutes the condition and serial number of the ballot box.
4. The Chairman shall then open the ballot box, retrieve the envelopes containing the Plebiscite Returns and direct the Secretary to record in the Minutes the total number of envelopes contained in the ballot box, the condition and serial numbers of the paper seals and the envelopes containing the Plebiscite Returns.
5. The Board through its Chairman breaks the paper seal of an envelope, retrieves the Plebiscite Returns, directs the Secretary to record in the Minutes the condition and serial number of the paper seal of the returns, break the seal, record the condition and serial number of the Plebiscite Returns, and thereafter, shows the Plebiscite Returns to the parties concerned.

   If there are no objections thereto, the Board shall assign the Plebiscite Returns in bunch to the Tabulation and Canvassing Unit for canvassing. The Secretary shall record the municipality and precinct number of the Plebiscite Returns in a logbook.

   If there are objections to a Plebiscite Returns, the Board shall immediately decide on the objections. If the decision is for the inclusion of the Plebiscite Returns, it shall be assigned to the Tabulation and Canvassing Unit; if the decision is not for its inclusion, the Board shall prepare a separate tally and place the contested Plebiscite Returns inside a ballot box.

   The Board retains the separate tally to await other contested Plebiscite Returns, if any. When a separate tally is filled up, the Board shall compute the sub-total of the affirmative and negative votes and places the separate tally inside the ballot box containing the Plebiscite Returns already canvassed.

   The Board rules on the objections after submission of evidence relative thereto. If there is an appeal on the decision, the Board elevates all records including the separate tally to the Commission.

   If there is no appeal to the decision, the Board shall forward the Plebiscite Returns to the Tabulation and Canvassing Unit for inclusion of the same in the canvass.
6. The Tabulation and Canvassing Unit, upon receipt of the Plebiscite Returns, shall:
   a. record in its Minutes the total number of Plebiscite Returns received and the serial numbers thereof;
   b. canvass the Plebiscite Returns and record the affirmative and negative votes in the Statement of Votes by Precinct in three (3) copies for distribution as follows:
      - National Plebiscite Board of Canvassers
      - Provincial Board of Canvassers
      - Commission on Elections through the Election Records and Statistics Department
   c. compute the sub-total of affirmative and negative votes in each page of the Statement of Votes by Precinct, using an adding machine with tape;
   d. compute the total affirmative and negative votes of a municipality;
   e. accomplish the certification on the Statement of Votes by Precinct; and
   f. forward the Statement of Votes by Precinct, Plebiscite Returns and adding machine tape to the Audit and Verification Unit.
7. The Audit and Verification Unit, shall then:
   a. check and verify the accuracy of the votes in the Statement of Votes by Precinct against the entries in the Plebiscite Returns; the correctness of the affirmative and negative sub-totals and the municipal total and that no Plebiscite Returns was canvassed more than once.

      If there is a discrepancy, the Statement of Votes by Precinct shall be returned to the Tabulation and Canvassing Unit concerned, which in turn, shall verify the discrepancy, make the necessary corrections and return the corrected Statement of Votes by Precinct to the Audit and Verification Unit.
   b. forward the Statement of Votes by Precinct and the Plebiscite Returns to the Board.
8. The Board shall:
   a. prepare a summary of the Statement of Votes by Precinct sub-totals in three copies indicating in the Statement of Votes by Precinct the following: (1) The Tabulation and Canvassing Unit which tabulated and canvassed the returns; (2) the serial numbers of the Statement of Votes by Precinct; (3) the number of precincts canvassed; (4) the number of affirmative and negative votes; and (5) the number of registered voters and those who actually voted.
   b. add the sub-total of the Statement of Votes by Precinct;
   c. compute the over-all total of affirmative and negative votes;
   d. prepare the Certificate of Canvass;
   e. sign and seal the Statement of Votes by Precinct, summary of the sub-totals of the Statement of Votes by Precinct and Certificate of Canvass, with serially numbered paper seals and place them in their respective envelopes duly sealed with a paper seal for distribution.

   Only such number of envelopes containing Plebiscite Returns that can be canvassed during the meeting of the Board shall be opened which number shall be recorded in the Minutes. In no case shall the Board suspend the canvass until all the opened Plebiscite Returns have been canvassed.

   Each time the Board suspends its meeting or goes on recess, it shall:

1. determine the totals of all the affirmative and negatives votes canvassed;
2. accomplish the Statement of Votes by Precinct in three (3) copies and close the same with the initials of the members following the last entry for each side of the plebiscite question;
3. place the canvassed Plebiscite Returns, the corresponding Statement of Votes by Precinct and the remaining unopened envelopes inside a ballot box which shall be locked with three padlocks and a self-locking metal seal, the serial number of which shall be duly recorded in the Minutes.

   The ballot box shall be in the custody of the chairman until the resumption of the canvass.

   Each member of the Board shall keep a key to the three padlocks of a ballot box, so that it cannot be opened without all of them being present.

   At the resumption of the canvass, the Secretary shall:
   a. verify the condition of the three padlocks and the metal seal of each ballot box;
   b. enter in the Minutes a description of the condition thereof, as well as the serial number of the self-locking metal seal;
   c. destroy the self-locking metal seal in the presence of the other members of the Board and watchers; and
   d. present to the Board the canvassed Plebiscite Returns, the corresponding Statement of Votes by Precinct and the remaining uncanvassed Plebiscite Returns contained in duly sealed and signed envelopes.

   In case its copy of a Plebiscite Return is missing, the Board shall, by messenger, obtain such missing returns from the Committee concerned, or if said Plebiscite Returns has been lost or destroyed, the Board upon prior authority of the Commission, may use any of the authentic copies of said returns or a certified copy thereof issued by the Commission. Forthwith, the Board shall refer the case for investigation to the Regional Election Director (RED) concerned who shall report his findings to the Commission.

Sec. 61. Completion of the canvass; distribution of Certificates of Canvass. - When all the Plebiscite Returns have been canvassed or the remaining uncanvassed Plebiscite Returns will not affect the results of the plebiscite in a province or city, the Board shall prepare five (5) copies of the Certificate of Canvass for distribution as follows:

1. National Plebiscite Board of Canvassers (NPBC);
2. Provincial Board of Canvassers/City Board of Canvassers;
3. Commission on Elections through the Election Records and Statistics Department;
4. Citizens arm; and
5. Sangguniang Panlalawigan/Panglungsod

The members of the Board shall print their full names and affix their signatures in the proper space at the bottom of the form and certify under oath that the entries therein are true and correct. The first three copies shall each be supported by the Statement of Votes by Precinct and the summary of the sub-totals of the Statement of Votes by Precinct.

The Sangguniang Panlalawigan/Panlungsod as the case may be, shall post its copy of the Certificate of Canvass in their offices and shall keep it posted for not less than one week.

Sec. 62. Delivery of the Certificate of Canvass to the Commission. - The chairmen of the Boards shall personally deliver by fastest means to the Commission on Elections sitting *en banc* as the National Plebiscite Board of Canvassers, in Manila the original copy of the Certificate of Canvass of the affirmative and negative votes cast in the plebiscite, together with a copy of the Statement of Votes by Precinct and the summary of the sub-totals of the Statement of Votes by Precinct duly signed by the members of the Board.

The Boards shall submit said documents not later than August 17, 2001. However, if on said dates the canvass has not yet been completed because there are still plebiscite returns, which have not been received by the Boards, the Chairman of the Board or his authorized representative, as the case may be, shall, not later than 12:00 o'clock noon of August 18, 2001, personally deliver to the Commission a partial certificate of canvass of all the affirmative and negative votes so far canvassed as of that date, together with the corresponding supporting Statement of Votes by Precinct and summary of the sub-totals of the Statement of Votes by Precinct.

Sec. 63. Submission of the minutes of the board. - Within ten (10) days from termination of canvass, the secretary of the Board shall submit to the Law Department of the Commission in Manila by registered mail a certified copy of the Minutes of the proceedings of the Board and shall notify by telegram the said Department of the date and the manner of transmittal of the Minutes.

ARTICLE X
CONCLUDING PROVISIONS

Sec. 64. Applicability of the Omnibus Election Code and other relevant election laws. - The provisions of the Omnibus Election Code, R.A. 6646 and other relevant election laws, which are germane or pertinent to plebiscite shall, as far as practicable or whenever appropriate, be applicable to the plebiscite governed by this Resolution.

Sec. 65. Effectivity. - This Resolution shall take effect on the seventh day following its publication in two newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Sec. 66. Dissemination. – The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this resolution and furnish copies thereof to all field offices of the Commission in the plebiscite areas, deputies of the Commission such as the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Philippine National Police, the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and the provincial, city and municipal treasurers in the plebiscite areas.

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Commissioner

Is wage hike a genuine safety net?

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

BEFORE the politicians and some crackpot economists muddle the wage issue, let us focus on the facts and the consequences of another wage hike. Let us begin with the end in mind. Can another wage increase really help the workers?

It is the general consensus among HR practitioners in the country today that increasing wages now via the regional wage boards will inevitably make life more difficult for businessmen without necessarily improving the economic conditions of the workers. Instead, this new round of increment in the cost of doing business will further drive away investors, eliminate job opportunities and exacerbate the precarious threat to industrial peace.

The announcement made by the labor secretary to gear up for another round of wage increases brings us again to the usual chicken-and-egg question—of whether increasing labor cost at this point in time, in order to address the problem of inflation, is not by itself inflationary. In short, is the proposed solution not a bigger problem?

In other words, is wage increase an authentic safety net? Wouldn't it aggravate inflation, jeopardize job security, endanger the continuity of small and medium-scale industries, and unduly disturb industrial peace? We know that, based on experience, the usual attendant problems arising from wage orders like issues on wage distortions and creditability of mandated wage rise vis-à-vis CBA negotiated improvement in wage levels. That is quite a mouthful of imponderables waiting to happen once we touch the wage issue.

It's the economy, madam

What's happening to our economy? Our President is an economist but all economic indicators are down. It is too early to judge her but the signs are not very promising. Exports were down by 5.6 percent as of May. Our volume of exports in 2000, from January to May, was $14.206 billion. This year, it is down to $13.407 billion. It is the fourth month in a row that exports registered a decline.

The Philippine economy is actually sliding down to a recession. Economists tell us that an economy is deemed to be on recession if it registers two consecutive quarters of negative growth in gross domestic product. GDP, of course, is the totality of our country's earnings from all goods and services produced domestically. Our GDP for the first quarter this year was only P230.8 billion, lower by 12 percent compared to the fourth quarter of last year's level of P262.7 billion.

Lowest peso value

The exchange rate of P53.10 to $1 as of July 5 indicates that it can breach the P55 boundary and may, at worst scenario, even reach P60. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had to interfere with free market forces by selling as much as $20 million to $30 million a day to save the peso from a sharp fall. Oil companies are buying dollars by bundles. The Chinese community in Binondo is also on the dollar fray. It seems that there is a massive capital flight that may further exacerbate the situation.

The dollar was worth P26.2157 in 1996 and P29.4707 in 1997. In April 2000, it rose to P41.40 then hit P55.75 on Jan. 17, 2001 at the height of Edsa II. After Edsa III, it was P51.45.

Consumer confidence hit its lowest level ever in June due to the perception that the government was unable to arrest the deterioration of the peace and order situation. The level of consumer confidence continued to dive like crazy in June. The consumer confidence index was at an all time low of 97.5 percent, compared to 105.5 in May, 113.3 in April, 125.5 in March, 131 in February and 132.1 in January.

Rising inflation

Our inflation rate reached 6.5 percent in May and 6.7 percent in June. This will further increase as soon as the country feels the total impact of the recent increases in the price of oil and the steady weakening of the peso. By the end of this year, inflation may hit double digit. Another wage increase will definitely be one of its strong drivers.

The labor secretary, like the President, is the last person to need a lecture on the economy. The lady is an economic expert and a respected authority on employment and wages. Her views of the economy are global and she sees the macro perspectives long before she was elected president of the ILO assembly in Geneva. She knows that the workers are the most vulnerable victims of high inflation rates. We therefore trust that the government will exercise utmost prudence on the wage issue.

It's not just the economy, sir

It is politics too. It is trying to appease the sectors that are more agitated. We have to understand that the Macapagal administration is under pressure from all sides. The pressure from the labor sector is too strong to resist. In fact, the abrogation of Dole Order No. 10 on the matter of job contracting was rushed without sufficient consultations because after the May 1 siege, the government thought it should offer something to labor.

But then, do we have to offer something that is harmful to labor in the long run? Shouldn't we disclose and explain to our working class the negative implications of another wage hike? And shouldn't we search for non-traditional benefits to shield the workers from the adverse effects of the worsening economy?

In search of safety nets

For instance, why don't we exempt minimum wage earners from income taxation? Why don't we ask SSS to allocate all the revenues generated from stock investments to soft-term loans? Or declare total amnesty for delinquent loans, and reinstate the presumption of "compensability" for all sickness, disability and death of workers? Why not widen the scope of Philhealth and Pag-Ibig and reduce all the salaries of GOCC and GFI executives. And, don't limit this to GMA's appointees.

Yes, Madam, perhaps we should be searching for options to cushion the impact of today's financial woes on the employees, without exacerbating the sufferings of the business sector.

(For comments, you can reach the writer at the following e-mail address: josephus.jimenez@pcppi.com.ph)

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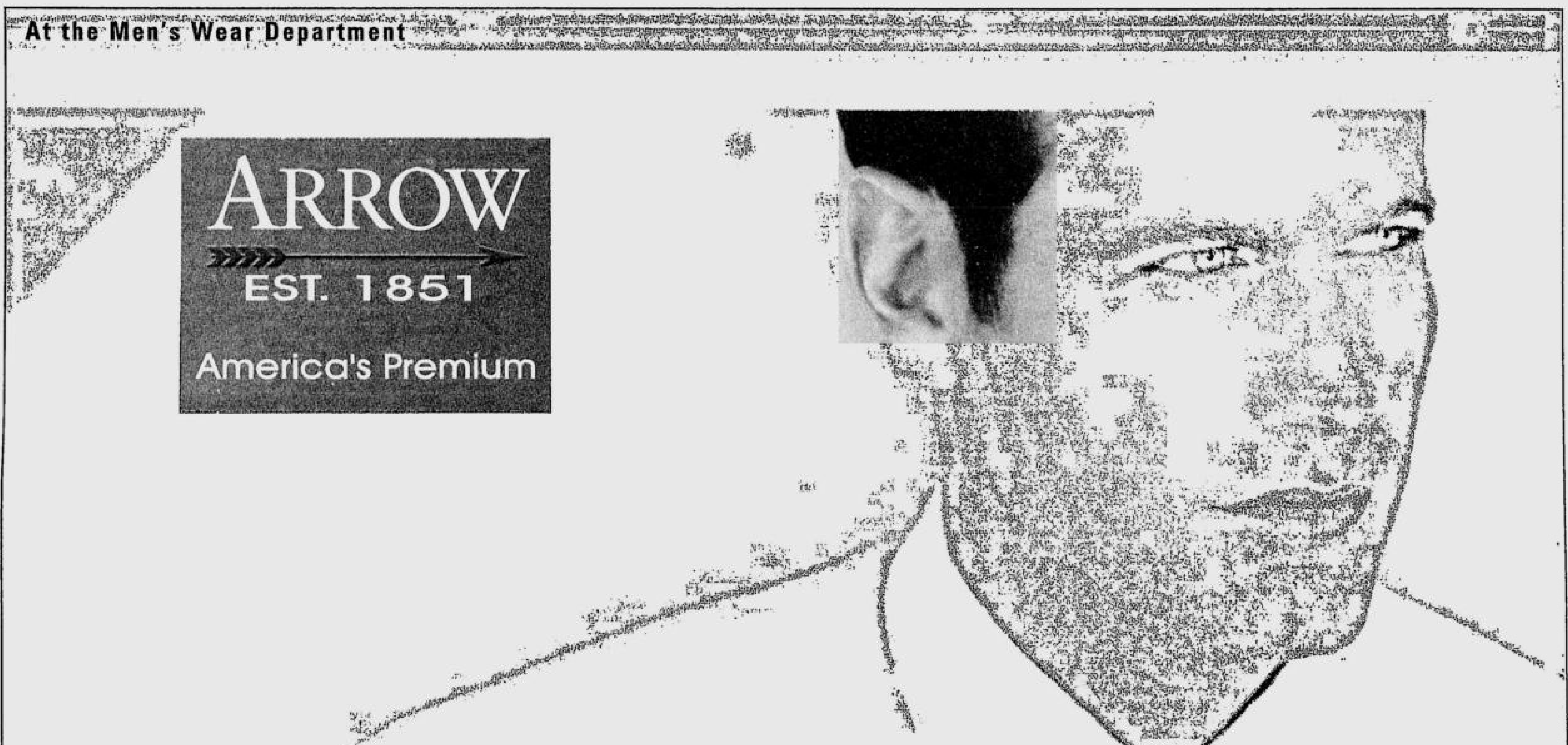
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MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

Pizza firm spends cool millions for hot makeover

BY MICHELLE V. REMO

THE PRICE of change is definitely high for Greenwich Pizza Corp., but the firm believes the potential returns down the road justify the expense.

MARKETING STRATEGY

In an effort to keep attuned with the ever-changing demands of the market, Greenwich is investing some P400 million to P600 million over a two- to three-year period to give its stores a face-lift, create new products and launch a tri-media campaign that includes getting some of the highest paid endorsers these days.

For store renovations alone, the company currently spends P2-3 million per store and millions more were budgeted for ad placements in radio, print and slots in prime time television shows.

Change, the company believes, is an indispensable marketing tool for keeping and increasing novelty-seeking customers. This belief is based on the idea that consumers, amid a market cramped with competing establishments, have to be won and coming out with something new is one of the best ways to make this happen.

But undergoing change is not as easy as 1-2-3. Coming out with the appropriate change in image that captures the fancy of the market is always crucial to guarantee success of an undertaking.

Yam Gruet, Greenwich director for operations, explains that the new Greenwich logo is done in brilliant green and vivid rose, a change from the previous dark green and red. This, she explains, matches the active and vibrant lifestyle of Greenwich's young target market.

Greenwich stores are undergoing renovations, with the new colors painted on its walls, and the new logo, with the letter "g," placed above the name "Greenwich" near the entrances.

Gruet further explains that Greenwich has particularly paid attention to vibrancy in its stores to give customers the impression that dining at Greenwich doesn't only satisfy one's hunger but also provides a pleasing dining experience for customers.

This is all part of its thrust to provide "full customer satisfaction."

In the new advertisement of Greenwich, it introduces the four ways to serve customers—serves food hot, fresh, fast and with a smile.

THE OLD Greenwich store design with its dark green color.

THE NEW look hopes to appeal to a younger crowd.

These, the company believes, are keys that will bring customers to dine in Greenwich stores. These concepts did not come as wild guesses, but were based on customer surveys and market research.

Cherry Caluya, Greenwich marketing director, shares that Greenwich conducts customer surveys and that the results are discussed regularly. Changes in the store logo and look are based on the conclusions from the market analysis made.

Serving food hot and fresh has been included in Greenwich's new service campaign since the "hotness" and "freshness" of foods served came out as two of the most significant points customers consider in choosing where to dine.

Caluya also emphasizes Greenwich's campaign for "fast" service, since market studies reveal that what customers dislike most, particularly about pizza houses, is the long wait for meals to be served.

Finally, serving food "with a smile" by food crew and customer attendants substantiates the store's claim of providing clients with a welcoming and vibrant dining experience.

Assimilating a much brighter and active image does not end with the new store design and service campaigns.

Included in the list is the "Greenwich Primo," which the food chain claims to be the "first-ever thick-crust and mozzarella-cheese pizza."

Greenwich marketing officer Clarizza de la Paz explains that Primo was purposely developed to fit the huge appetite of their target market—the working men and women in their 20s and early 30s who allot their idle time to dine out with friends after a day's work.

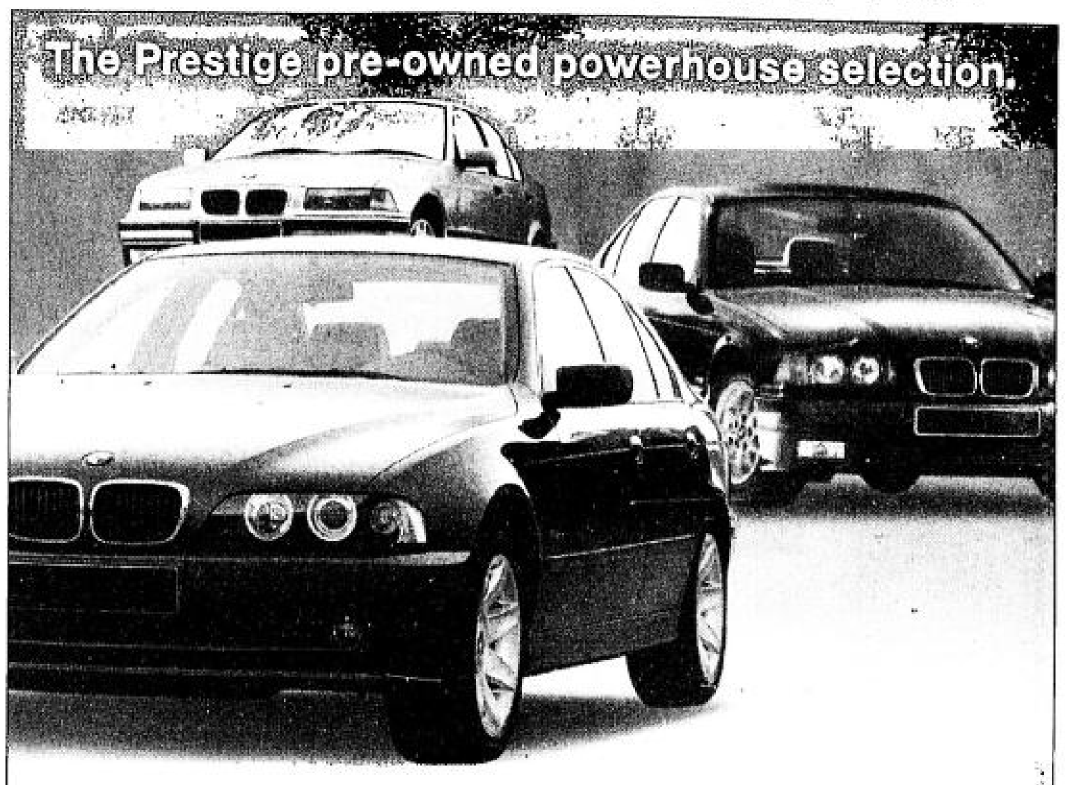
Greenwich also launched the "Crispy Fried Chicken."

Greenwich earlier launched the "Pearl Coolers" as a response to demand for shakes, especially during the summer months.

Earlier still, it launched its new pizzas with "*mas pinasarap, mas pinasiksik sa* toppings," with Donita Rose and Ryan Agoncillo as image models. Again, the objective was to keep up with the need for change and to fit itself further with its young target market.

Change has apparently been the name of the game for Greenwich, which now claims to have reached the No.1 spot in the pizza-pasta business in terms of market share. Since Jollibee Foods Corp. bought Greenwich in 1994, the food chain continues to grow, now with close to 200 operating outlets nationwide, from the original 50.

Hitting P1 billion sales as early as the end-1997—just three years after Jollibee's acquisition—proves how change has raked in the profits for Greenwich.



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H.S. Massage09176473839

Male #16 Palanan 7320659

Male Masseur 4101234

UNWIND M/F Mkt 7520437

VIP-M/F-8312373 09193591771

REFLEXOLOGY

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•CHEAP LBAHAY 9260424•

ELF 7421457

L-BAHAY 8383742/5447599

LBAHAY 7113540

L-BAHAY 712-16-92

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LIPAT BAHAY 713-0878/716-9177

LIPAT BAYAY 824-1227

•LIPAT•731-6833

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMML/RESDL

PASIG

Office & Residential Units Raquel • 634-1212

SAN JUAN

NE Greenhills 1300m² 55/m² 681-2457 / 412-1825

PROVINCIAL

GEN. SANTOS CITY BEACH LINE 8 HAS. LOT Comm'l Indust'l 554-6185

HOUSE & LOT

ALABANG

Rizal Vill. H&L or Lot Only Call 534-6610 Jojo

KALOOCAN

351res indlnrEDSA 9978590

LAS PINAS

LA187m² Bung 3BR 2TB GD Loc. neg rush 874-9074/75

LA204m² Bung 3BR NR Sch 1.6M neg rush 874-9074/75

MARIKINA

1511m² Ipil St Marikina Hts Raquel • 634-1212

FRIENDLY VILLAGE 240m² 3BR FA116m² P1.25M Vic Gigie 8903461 loc. 27/25

Grnlnd bnew 3br 2M 9487112

Rush462Provt Vill 9978590

PASIG

460m² Nr Ultra Robinson Circle Raquel • 634-1212

GREEN PARK SUBD. 225m² w/ 7BR & 3TB FA264m² P4.5M Vic 8903461 loc. 27 & 25

P5M 809m² 3BR 2TB w/Drs Apt 641-0424 / 25 Rowena

QUEZON CITY

Acropolis 4br 4tb 18-25M Call 633-7601/03

Baler QC L3000 w/Hse Rollin New Mla L625 V Lot New Mla L280 2Stry Call 928-1469

Bnwe Malaya RUSH 7314018

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Fairview Park 446m² P5M nr Fview hosp JR 4308727

LA450 FA300 Ind'l Valley Raquel • 634-1212

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Loyola Heights Subd P8M T9840150 / 09194041057

Novaliches 360T T9358850

Nr Rbinson,SMFview 260m² only P980T "cheap"4140418

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PROVINCIAL

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OTHER AREAS

NoDP,2650/mo 09195898014

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

HOUSE & LOT

OTHER AREAS

CanyonWoods Btngas 7.5M ownrlvng neg0917-8143792

LOT

MANILA

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MUNTINLUPA

Hilsboro LA 400 Prime Loc 7500m² rush 874-9074/75

PLEASANT VILL w/direct access rd to FILINVEST Alabang 477m² P5,500/m² Vic Gigie 8903461 loc. 27

PARANAQUE

Exec.Heights Brgy.Sunvalley LA306m² 2M 0917-8143792

PASIG

869m² Valle Verde 5 Call Raquel • 634-1212

QUEZON CITY

900m² Com'l Lot New York cor Annapolis T:3658242

Capitol Homes QC 551sqm Call 0919-4227654

Loyola Grand 600m² @ P8500 Call 09185079799

Nr. Baler SFDM QC 445m² V/Lot w/Fence • 928-3267

RIZAL

180m² FOLIAGE COTTONWDS T9118555 09178303972

PROVINCIAL

20 METERS WIDE New Hi-Way Molino No Down, 20 yrs Only P3,500 monthly 831-7046, 835-6841 551-7902, 834-6840

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OTHER AREAS

500m² TAGAYTAY CITY P10T/m² T- (046)4314830

TOWN&COUNTRY Southville 209m² P800T Vic 8903461L.27

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

MAKATI

Antel Platinum Valero Mkti 40.5m² w/Prkng Lot 658-2115/16

MANILA

Annapolis Ghills w/View 3BR / 3TB nice • 928-3267

Antel Seaview Roxas Blvd Stud 2.2M terms ok 928-3267

MIDLANDPLAZA CONDO 37m² F.FURN 1.4M 527-3775/68

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Madison Suites 78m² 2BR Hi-Flr 412-1825 • 681-2457

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Rush! Pioneer Highlands 2BR3.8MDBO09178143792

Various Wack² Condos Lee Gardens 534-6610 Jojo

Wack² Royal Mansion Studio P1.5M 633-7601/03

PASIG

86m² OMM Bldg. Ortigas Center Raquel • 634-1212

Ofic Condo 220m² w/2 Prkg Tektite Raquel • 634-1212

Ortigas S-123BR 5Yrs 0% Int. T671-2049 • 671-9651

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

PASAY

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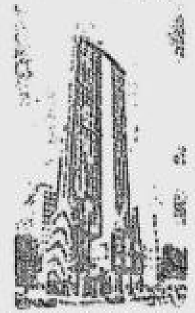

LOC. NR RXAS BLVD.
DP = 25T-81T / mo.
Pay in 10 mos. @ 0 Int.
BAL. = 11T - 27T/ mo.
Pay in 10 yrs.
6346840/41, 8317046, 5517902

PASIG

Rush! Renaissance 2000 DBO 2br+2tb 09178143792

QUEZON CITY

C-5 Mindanao Ave 680T & Up / Unit 3yrs to pay 0% Int 9256340 / 09185079799

OPEN HOUSE TILL SUNDAY 50T ldp 3yrs 0% Int 12-18T /m 10-30%dp Inhse nr UP PSBA bank hosp w/ Rngehod cbnts cellfon MoversDevt&Mktg 4331073/ 4210734 / 1350 / 9120876

SALE/RENT 2-3BR TERMS AFFORDABLE T414-0573

TSora 3BR+1md 2TB P2.5M 2cgrge DBO 0917-8143792

Woodside NMla 915-5177 Montgomery Nr. St. Lukes

OTHER AREAS

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Habay, Bacoor, Cavite
near SM Bacoor
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WESTVILLE HOMES
Ligas, Bacoor, Cavite
Initial DP: P 15,000

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Las Piñas City
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W'hse 4 Sale/Rent 1000m² Call 534-6610 Jojo

FARM/FISHPEN

Pangasinan Hway/Shore 4H/8H resp 0478311501

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

MAKATI

Newly Reno NR Buendia Condo type Tel. 7470101

MANILA

Abad Santos 12T 7816319

MAKATI

SANLO 3BR 5268048/49

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

QUEZON CITY

DUPLEX 4BR 2TB 1cg nice kitchen 275 Ermin Garcia CUBAO nr Aurora 426-2998

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

BSA Mansion Studio Type 10T Call 751-8342

KWOOD Mkti 3BR3TB maid qr pkg 20T 8996632 Irene

Rockwell 35T 53sqm 1CG 915-5177 • 0917-5325440

MANILA

Condo nr DLSU 0917-7141978

MANDALUYONG

Governors Place Shaw 3br FF Bnew Appliances Tel Parking 25K Neg. 688-84425

Pioneer Highlands - Studio Unit 43sqm 815-0298

PASIG

Ren. Twr 223m² 3BR 9.5M 2Sty 681-2457 • 412-1825

Renaissance 2000 Brand New FF w/Prkng Call 658-2115/16

QUEZON CITY

QC 4BR 3TB 932-8965 Nice

OTHER AREAS

Tiffany Mansion 2BR 25T /mo. FF No Pkg 815-0298

FOR LEASE

Along Mla. East Rd. 600m² Call 658-2115/16

Coml Space 200m² nr QC Hall T922-4153 ; 922-4150

Lots Alng Valley Golf Rd. 1.0 to 4.0 Call 658-2115/16

Taipan Ofc 129m² 160m² Nice Unit 6812457 4121825

ROOM & BOARD

Mkna T9338841&7313776

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FINANCING-EASY FAST VERY PRIVATE CONVENIENT H/L Business Personal Gigie/Ali 8903461 loc. 25/23

BUSINESS RENTAL

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P. TAMO 8525295 5479610

Prestige Tower-Ortigas 60-150Sqm 815-0298

Shaw Blvd-Ortigas 60-100 Sqm 380Sqm 815-0298

MALATE OFFICES 5268048

Tektite PSE 0917-8398865

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TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

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Besta P240T Neg. 671-3535 • 733-2507 Cell. 0917-8472716

Pregio / Pride 0917-7950696

MERCEDES

'98 MB100D 395T 3609523

MITSUBISHI

L300 Alum Van 250T 5313356 • 5315538

TOYOTA

96 Toyota XL (Red)Mileage 66TKm 220T 534-6610 Jojo

97CROWN ROYALE Saloon P870T Neg A1 Cond Tel. 9220329 • 4337772

VAN/PICK-UP

2000 Isuzu Dropsd 6Whlr P150T Vic 8903461 Loc. 27

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453 4538295

4931802;9344988 L3/ MB

BrdalMB/Vans 9296250/4535288

Van Coaster Bus 440-91-71

HiAce L300 Urvan 8264223

L300 T 4161105 / 7411356

MB 100 Van 643-7397

STAREX L3 9121809/7268388

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2% w/o taking car 7262780

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WANTED TO BUY

BUYING ROLEX others, High Price CASH CALL 09178142309/7269687

Buy/Pawn Diamonds T8342886

URGENT RECRUITMENT

A foreign-assisted project is subcontracting an individual that will produce a process/methodology manual on the enhancement of civil society capability in undertaking Value-For-Money audits.

The prospective candidate shall perform the following:

a) prepare the design for the manual including the cover design
b) write and edit the manual
c) ensure the completion and submission of the reports and of the manual within the period provided
d) undertake consultation/validation with key stakeholders

The candidate must have a degree in Development communications, marketing, Mass Communications, economics or other related courses. Knowledge in audit procedures is an advantage.

The complete Terms of Reference (TOR) can be access in the www.undp.org.ph/bc/.

Duration of contract: August to December 2001

Please submit your application letter, comprehensive resumé and sample of similar work undertaken on or before **19 July 2001** to Development Support Services Center, United Nations Development Programme, 7th Floor NEDA sa Makati Building, 106 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City (via courier) or P.O. Box 7285 Domestic Airport Post Office Lock Box, 1300 Domestic Road, Pasay City (via airmail) Tel. Nos. (632) 892-4528/892-0611 to 25, Fax Nos. (632) 816-4061/893-9598 Email Address: be_admin.ph@undp.org

URGENT RECRUITMENT

A foreign-assisted project is in need of the services of a non-governmental organization/civil society organization/people's organization to jointly conduct a Value-for-Money (VFM) Audit with the Commission on Audit. The chosen organization shall be trained in participatory VFM audit and is expected to assist in the preparation of the process/methodology manual that will focus on enhancing capability in undertaking Participatory VFM audits and in monitoring and evaluation activities.

The prospective organization must:

1. Have legal personality as NGO/CSO/PO
2. Possess technical capabilities to undertake the audit including monitoring and evaluation activities
3. Have adequate staff and reasonably sound financial status
4. Have linkages at least nationwide
5. Have extensive work in policy advocacy and in project monitoring.

Preference is also given to the organization that enjoys public support, has experience in working with external organizations or donors, and is based in the province/area where the audit is to be conducted.

Duration of contract: August to December 2001

Please submit your application letter, sample of similar work undertaken, and such other pertinent documents/information about the organization on or before **19 July 2001** to the COA-UNDP Project Monitoring Unit, 2nd Floor, Executive Offices, Commission on Audit, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. Telefax Nos. (632) 932-72-35/(632) 951-69-55 or Telephone No. (632) 951-04-88 (c/o Atty. Isabel D. Agito).

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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F-Escort 1277-05080 18-23

WTD: Yaya/H.Maids/Int'l. Cook, Fam. Cook 660-4589

MALE/FEMALE

CARE GIVER T5280722

OFC STAFF 9134470 Joyce

OFC STAFF 9134470 JELLY

OFC STAFF 9134470 REY

•OFC STAFF*9134470 Ayna•

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BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

dti DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **TIS SOLUTIONS, INC.** with office address at **Unit 21-A, Multinational Bancorporation Center, 6805 Ayala Avenue, Makati City** for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended, as **New IT Service Firm in the Field of Support and Knowledge-based Service, Business Process Outsourcing** at a capacity of **250,000 man-hours/year** and with project site at **Unit 21-A, Multinational Bancorporation Center, 6805 Ayala Avenue, Makati City** has been officially accepted on **July 9, 2001** and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 9th day of July 2001.

(Sgd.) **BOBBY G. FONDEVILLA**
Officer-In-Charge
Legal Services Department

(PDI - July 13, 2001)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

Wanted! Computer Teacher Part Time Tel 928-8156

ANNOUNCEMENT

JCR Pawnshop located at 958-A E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave Quezon City will auction all unredeemed pledges on July 28, 2001 at 1:30p.m. V. Zamora (Auctioner)

AUCTION SALE

NATION PAWNSHOP INC. Poblacion, Meyc. Bulacan will sell all unredeemed pledges of Jan 2001 on July 16, 2001, 10am - Lanuza & Sons Auctioneer

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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RTW 4 Tiange Bazar 3738821

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Work From Home 8937903

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given of the extrajudicial settlement of the estate of MARIANO SALOMON, ANTONINA SALOMON and GERONIMA SALOMON executed by theirs on May 25, 2001 acknowledge before Atty. Sofronio Untalan, Notary Public in and for the City of Makati entered in his Notarial Register as Doc. #399; Page #80; Book #XV, Series of 2001
PDI -- July 13, 20 & 27, 2001

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that Equitable Bank Stock Cert#59427 & MBTC Stock Cert#111140 in the name of Enrique Juan/Rosario Melmel Juan have been lost. (PDI-July 6,13 & 20, 2001)

PERSONAL

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DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 911-6001 loc. 6592 / 911-6433

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites all manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the ***SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF 40MM GRENADE LAUNCHERS*** with an approved budget of ***Forty Three Million Seven Hundred Forty Thousand Pesos (P43,740,000.00)*** under the **AFP Modernization Program.**

Only bids from suppliers who are themselves the manufacturers of said equipment shall be entertained.

Bid documents will be available for issuance starting ***July 13, 2001*** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Materiel and Technology Development, J9, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of ***Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00)*** which is not refundable. The form of payment will be in cash or cashier's check.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on ***July 26, 2001*** at ***10:00 a.m.*** *(local time)* at the *Armed Forces of the Philippines Commissioned Officers Club (AFPCOC), Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.*

Deadline for submission of applications for eligibility statements and the bid envelopes is on ***August 17, 2001 at 9:00 a.m.*** *(local time)* and followed by the Opening of Bids at ***1:00 p.m.*** at the *Armed Forces of the Philippines Commissioned Officers Club (AFPCOC), Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.*

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **LTGEN ROY A CIMATU AFP**
The Deputy Chief of Staff, AFP
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - July 12 & 13, 2001)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on 26 July 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at the Auditorium of the DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave. Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE			
Metro Manila			
LRD-113A	EDSA, Balintawak, Quezon City (fronting Clover Leaf Market and beside Nissan Showroom)	36,015 m² commercial/industrial lots (TCT N-171471, N-171472 N-171473, N-171475, N-171476) with buildings and improvements.	P 442,836,000.00
LRD-113B	Galas, Quezon City (bounded by Luskot, Serrano Laktaw and Pedro Paterno Sts.)	2,400 m² residential/industrial lots (TCT Nos. N-171474 & N-171477) with buildings and improvements.	P 25,000,000.00
VAB-91	Int. Calle Maytubig, San Rafael District, Pasay City	404.4 m² residential lot (TCT T-143002).	P 8,108,000.00
VAB-92	Int. Calle Maytubig, San Rafael District, Pasay City	398.3 m² residential lot (TCT T-143001).	P 7,966,000.00
VAB-93	Int. Calle Maytubig, San Rafael District, Pasay City	327.20 m² residential lot (TCT T-143000).	P 6,544,000.00
VCP-39	1304 Int. M. Naval St., Navotas	338 m² residential/industrial lot (TCT No. C-300082) with buildings and improvements.	P 585,000.00
MEE-145	Cor. of Road Lot 11 and 27, Congressional Model Subd., Camarin, Caloocan City	228 m² vacant residential lot (TCT No. 334416).	P 441,500.00
Bulacan			
VAB-94	Tadeo St., Poblacion, Bustos	2,999 m² residential/commercial lot (TCT 118053) with buildings and improvements.	P 13,167,000.00
Rizal			
LTY-141	Saturn St., Meteor Homes, Cupang, Antipolo City	410 m² residential lot (TCT No. 398264) with buildings and improvements.	P 1,089,700.00
CHATTELS (Sale on "as-is, where-is" basis)			
VCP-53a	FCIE Compound, Brgy. Langcaan, Dasmariñas Cavite	23 units various machinery and equipment for fabrication of bolts and nuts. Sale on per unit basis.	P 7,002.00 to P 1,269,714.00 per unit
LRD-140	Pinatubo Bricks Mfg. Compound Brgy. Estrada Capas, Tarlac	11 units various brick making machinery and equipment (in dismantled condition)	P 706,000.00

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers:

892-3836 or 818-9511 loc. 2128 for Code starting with L;
893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2144 for Code starting with V; and
815-1450 or 818-9511 loc. 2139 for Code starting with M.

SPECIAL ACCOUNTS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI -- July 12 & 13, 2001)

PHILIPPINE POSTAL SAVINGS BANK, INC.
PostalBank Center, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila
DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The **Philippine Postal Savings Bank, Inc.** through its Disposal Committee invites interested buyers to bid on any of the items listed below. The submission of bids will be on July 19, 2001, and the opening and awarding will be on July 23, 2001 at 2:00 p.m., respectively at 2F PostalBank Center, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

Location of Properties	*Description*
Brgy. Silang, Junction West, Tagaytay City	10,000 square meters Lot 9, Pcs-04-000232 TCT No. T-40766
No. 23 4th Avenue Brgy. Bagong Lipunan, Cubao District, Quezon City	70 square meters Lot 6-D, Psd-13-003295 TCT No. 208384
Cherry Homes Street, Moonwalk Village, Barangay La Huerta Parañaque City (land & improvement)	238 square meters with improvements-residential building 3-door apartment type TCT No. 145499, 145500, 145501 145502, 145503, 145504, 145505, 145506
Imperial Royale Townhouse, Barangay Talon Dos (Pamplona) Las Piñas City, Metropolitan Manila	76 square meters; 60 sq. meters floor area one townhouse unit Lot 15, Block 5, Psd-00-032799 TCT No. 71842

All bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope and shall be accompanied by Bidder's Bond equivalent to 20% of the total bid price in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check only.

The Bank reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality contained therein and accept the offer considered most advantageous.

For further information, please call 5270057, 5270053 loc. 108 or 141.

(Sgd.) EDWIN A. REMODO
Chairman, Disposal Committee

(PDI--July 13, 2001)

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(NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

AD NO. PD 2001-38

Rebidding Date : July 24, 2001

PB010709-T3WG6360	CONSTRUCTION/ELECTRICAL HARDWARE & SUPPLIES (Tiles, Cement, Sand, Electrical Tape, Lamp Holder, etc.)
PB010709-T3JR6364	NITROGEN, Liquid, Refill only
PB010709-T3WG6366	FACEMILL HOLDER ACCESSORIES (Screw, Shim Screw, etc.) HAND TOOLS (Pliers, Cutter, Screwdriver Sets, Gloves, etc.)/ GRASS CUTTER
PB010709-T3JR6369	COMPRESSOR, Aircon, SD-508 Ordinary Grove, O-ring Type
PB010709-T3JR6370	SERVICES: Supply of Labor and Materials for the Rehabilitation & Relocation of Deepwell #2
PB010709-T3JR6371	SERVICES: Supply of Labor and Materials for the General Repair of Mazda Van E-2000, Model 1990

**Bidding Date : July 31, 2001

2001-38-01	CONSTRUCTION/ELECTRICAL HARDWARE & SUPPLIES (Lumber, Plywood, Paint, Paint Thinner, Door Knob, Lamp/ Starter Holder, Plug, etc.)
2001-38-02	ENGINE ASSEMBLY, Complete with Floor Shift 5 Speed Transmission & Transfer Case (4x4), 4D56 Turbo Diesel Series
2001-38-03	SERVICES: Supply and Installation of T1/E1 Cable & Terminal Accessories (Shielded Twisted Pair Cable, Terminal Blocks, Backmount Frames, Plugs, etc.)

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor, Bldg. 2, NPC-OBC, Quezon Ave. cor. Agham Rd., Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 upon payment of P50.00, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the telephone directory. **Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms to participate in this bidding is on **July 20, 2001.**

Bidding documents available on **July 12, 2001 upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable**, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). **Last day of issuance of bidding documents **July 26, 2001.**

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents **mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 AM.** For inquiries, please call no. 921-2574.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI - July 12 & 13, 2001)

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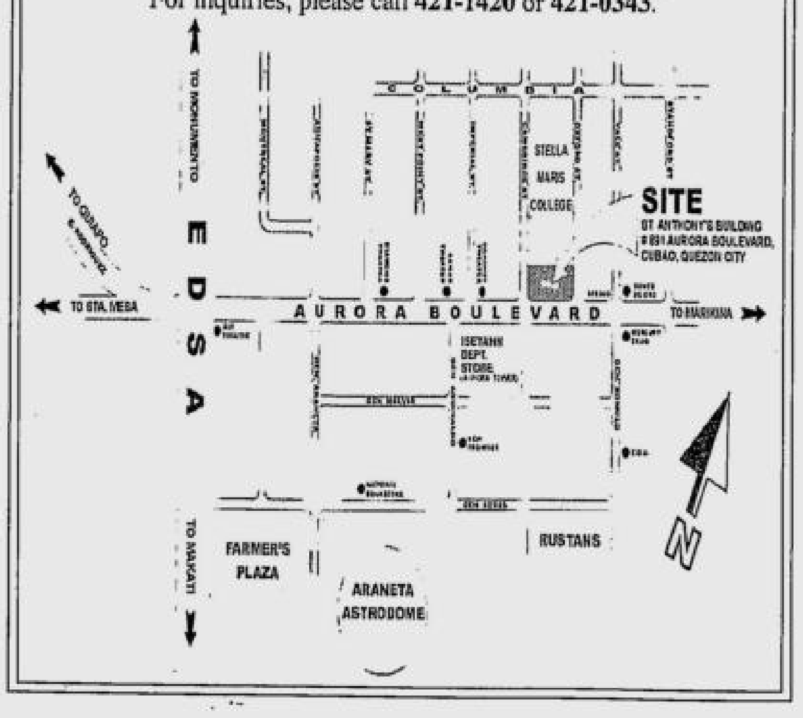

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

June 28, 2001

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The National Housing Authority is inviting interested contractors who have completed similar land development works (at least 50% of Estimated Contract Cost) within the last three (3) years and accredited with PCAB/IAC, to prequalify and bid for the contract listed below:

Bid Package	Scope of Works	Project Cost (Php M.)	PCAB Category	IAC Classification
Koronadal S/S Project Koronadal, South Cotabato	Land dev't. road, & drainage works	8.40	B	Medium A for roads

A. Eligibility Statement forms bid document/plans as well as other information are available at the Office of the BAC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, NHA Main Building, Diliman, Quezon City upon submission of the following: a) Letter of Intent; b) PCAB/IAC License; c) Certificate of Completion/Acceptance and Contract Agreement of completed similar project, and d) Presentation of original documents for authentication purposes.

B. Payment of non-refundable fee of P2,500.00 per set shall be received only from authorized representatives.

C. Bid deposits shall be in the form of cash, Manager's or Cashier's Check.

D. Deadline of submission of LOI/other documents is on July 23, 2001. All other subsequent activities will be announced through a bid bulletin.

E. The NHA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive formally of any defect thereon, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. EDGARDO D. PAMINTUAN**
General Manager

(PDI--July 12, 13 & 20, 2001)

INQUIRER
TRiViA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

Foot root

Q. Why are there 12 inches in a foot?

A. As the term implies, a foot was originally the length of a man's foot, from the back of the heel to the tip of the big toe. It was the ancient Romans who decided to divide it into 12 *unciae*—the word from which are derived both the inch and the ounce (the ounce was once a twelfth of a pound). The inch was roughly a thumb's breadth. The Romans introduced the inch to Britain, where it was incorporated into the English system of weights and measures.

For the Record. Abebe Bikila, a 28-year-old member of Ethiopia's Imperial Palace Guard, caused a sensation at the 1960 Rome Olympics when he won the marathon barefoot while completing the gruelling 42.195-kilometer run in a world best of 2 hours 15 minutes and 16.2 seconds. Four years later in Tokyo, Bikila repeated his gold medal run—but this time with shoes and socks—in another world best time of 2 hours 12 minutes 11.2 seconds. This made him the first man to win back-to-back Olympic marathon titles. It took 16 years before Bikila's mark was equalled by Waldemar Cierpinski of East Germany, who reigned supreme at the 1976 Montreal and 1980 Moscow Olympics. Cierpinski came to Philippines in 1981 and easily won the 1st Manila International Marathon.

Past Forward. This day in 1930: Uruguay beat Argentina, 4-2, to win the first soccer World Cup, which was held in the Uruguayan capital, Montevideo. In victorious host country, the following day was declared a national holiday; in Argentina, an angry mob pelted the Uruguayan embassy with stones. The World Cup was on its way.

WORD WATCH

Karera : from the Spanish *carrera*, 'run; race track.'

PDI -- July 13, 2001

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines

PHILIPPINES 2000
Sama-Sama sa DECS

Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim
Office of the Undersecretary

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) through the Health and Nutrition Center (HNC) is inviting manufacturers/suppliers for the bidding of 1,500 sets of Glass Ionomer Dental Filling Materials for Atraumatic Restorative Treatment (ART) project in selected divisions/schools nationwide.

All interested manufacturers/suppliers must submit a Letter of Intent before obtaining bid documents starting **July 12 to 24, 2001** at the BAC Secretariat Office, Rm. 112-A, Mabini Bldg., ULTRA Complex, Pasig City.

A pre-bid conference will be held on **July 24, 2001**, 10:00 AM at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Bldg. I, ULTRA Complex, Pasig City. The Submission and Opening of Bids will be **Aug. 8, 2001** at the same time and place mentioned above.

DECS-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Undersecretary
Chairman, DECS-BAC

(PDI -- July 12 & 13, 2001)

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BRIG. GEN. IGNACIO J. CANTO (RET.)

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 10, 2001 at the age of 78.

His loving wife **Luz**; children **Dingdong** (†) and **Julie, Belle** and **Amor, Chong** and **Chris** (†), **Ting** and **Tony, Iggy** and **Jun, Bong** and **Lorica**; his grandchildren **Carina, Cito Boy, Ikit, Imon, J-Ann, Aldwin, Tonton, Chin chin, Camille, Isa, Pyke, Fritz** and **Karla** request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Villamor Air Base (VAB) Chapel, Pasay City.

Mass will be held at 10:00 a.m., Sunday, July 15, 2001 at VAB Chapel afterwhich interment follows at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Makati.

"God saw you getting tired
when a cure was not to be.
He closed His arms around you
and whispered 'Come to Me.'"

VIOLET (Baba) POWELL MERLO

9 October 1929 — 27 June 2001

Loving wife of **ANTONIO**

mother of **GILBERT** and **RACHAEL, LAURA** and **SAUL BRYAN**

grandmother of **AIYANA, KASHIA, JAMES, LIANNE** and **VANESSA**

sister of **GRACE, WINNIE, ELEANOR, DICK, GEORGIE** (†) and **LORRAINE**

Was called home to our Father in Heaven in Sydney, Australia after receiving the Blessed Sacrament.

A memorial Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, 14 July 2001 at the crypt in San Antonio Church, Forbes Park at 4:00 PM.

DR. ELENA LIM BENJAMIN

Retired Superintendent:
Laguna, Or. Mindoro, Cavite

January 13, 1925 – July 1, 2001

Her beloved sisters: **Aurora & Adelaida Lim**; children: **Zorayda & Bombing, Benjamin² & Ma. Asuncion, Ruelito & Editha, Michael & Gloria**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the San Isidro Labrador Mortuary, Biñan, Laguna.

Interment will be on Sunday, July 15, 2001 at 1:00 p.m. at the Loyola Memorial Cemetery, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Eternal
life
will swallow
up that which
can die. God
made us for
this very
reason and
He has given
us the Spirit
as a guarantee
that we will
live again.

2 Cor. 5:4-5

In Loving Memory
On his 20th Death Anniversary

JOSE B. LEDESMA

September 29, 1911 – July 13, 1981
President, West Visayas State College (1968 - 1977)

Masses will be celebrated at the following churches on:

July 13, 2001

Our Lady of Monserrat Church, *Gran Plains Subdivision, Jaro, Iloilo City*	6:00 AM
San Nicolas de Tolentino Church, *Dao, Antique*	6:00 AM
St. Paul's Church, *Congers, New York, USA*	6:30 AM
Don Bosco Church, *Makati City*	7:30 AM

July 14, 2001

Our Lady of Fatima Chapel, *L.J. Ledesma Village, Jaro, Iloilo City*	6:00 PM

The family requests relatives, friends, and readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

PAZ MATALA

Peacefully joined our Creator on July 10, 2001.

Her loving mother, brothers & sisters, request to pray for her soul.

Her remains lie in state at her residence at #37 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City.

Interment will be on July 15, 2001 at 10:00 a.m. after the Mass.

We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God.

2 Cor. 4:14

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People, Events & Products

Petron voted 'SuperBrand' in Reader's Digest poll

A POLL conducted by Reader's Digest reaffirms Petron's top position in the Philippine market. Local consumers voted Petron as their brand of choice in the Gas Station Category of the SuperBrands 2001 Survey, evaluating it in terms of product and service quality, value, image, trustworthiness, and understanding of customer needs.

The Gold Award status accorded to Petron is indicative of the company's steadfast commitment to customer service and satisfaction. "It is rewarding to know that our continuous efforts at improving Petron's services are recognized by our valued customers," says President and CEO Motassim A. Al-Ma'ashouq. "The honor of being a SuperBrand further inspires us to work at offering the consuming public nothing less than the best," he says.

This is seconded by Walter A. Tan, Petron's vice president for marketing, who believes that the awards given out by the consumers themselves are the best gauge of a company's performance. "We are in business primarily for these people. To get a positive feedback from them is an assurance enough that we have succeeded in what we strive to accomplish."

The SuperBrands Survey is conducted annually by Reader's Digest Asia's most widely-read magazine, among its readers in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines. Its aim is to shed light on the consumer preferences of a representative cross section of Asian society by digging deeper into their psyche and discovering their favorite brands.

San Francisco HS '77 meet

THERE will be a regular membership meeting of members of San Francisco High School (formerly Don Mariano Marcos High School in Quezon City) batch 1977 to be held at Bahay Alumni at UP Diliman, Quezon City on July 14, Saturday at 3 p.m.

Please call Socorro Lladones (926-5015), Gloria Garcia (926-6271), Jerry Brazil (929-1766), Amando Esteban (806-9234), Flor Pascubillo (527-3559) or Satur Madrinico (920-6721).

Picpa membership amnesty extended

DUE to persistent requests to extend the amnesty program on Picpa membership, the National Board of Directors has approved June 1 to Aug. 31, 2001 as another amnesty period. Under this amnesty, all members in arrears of their dues shall only pay P500 on or before Aug. 31, otherwise they will be paying much more thereafter.

Please call the Picpa national headquarters at 700 Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City or call Roy Trinidad, national MCC chair at (063) 221-3406 and (063) 492-0795, Iligan City; or Horace Dumlao and Emma Culion at 723-0691 to 95 or 726-9456 for more information.

COCA-COLA SCHOLARS ATTEND VALUES WORKSHOP

The first batch of graduating scholars of Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines Inc.'s (CCFPI) Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (BSEE) scholarship program recently attended a special workshop at the Training Center in Santa Rosa, Laguna. The 34 scholars, who qualified for the scholarship in 1997, participated in special sessions on public speaking and values formation by professors Onofre Pagsanghan of the Ateneo de Manila [illegible]

AGFI TURNS OVER MUNICIPAL HEALTH CENTER

The Municipal Health Center of Liloan in Cebu was designed and built by the people of Liloan themselves with the help of the local government unit and the Aboitiz Group Foundation Inc. (Agfi). Agfi provided funding of P450,000 and the LGU P150,000. Liloan mayor Panphil B. Frasco (left) and Agfi trustee Roberto E. Aboitiz cut the ribbon during turnover ceremonies of the new municipal health center.

UST Hospital art contest

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Hospital Division of Rehabilitation Medicine presents an on-the-spot art contest for persons with disabilities. Participants must be Persons with Disabilities (PWD's).

Participants or their representatives must register at the 4th floor of the A. Mabini Rehabilitation Center-Clinical Division on or before July 15. For particulars, contact Arlene or Jojo at 731-3001 loc. 2432/2297/2488 or 781-8018.

BITS & Clips

Upcat refresher course set

AHEAD Tutorial and Review Center will hold refresher review courses for the upcoming University of the Philippines College Admission Test (Upcat) on Sunday, July 15, at La Salle Greenhills in San Juan and on July 2 again at La Salle Greenhills. Each refresher course will last from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. All students who attended Ahead's Upcat review courses last summer are entitled to attend the refresher courses for free. Ahead summer reviewees are advised to call Ahead at 426-0034 to 3 to make arrangements.

5th Dancesport competition

THE DANCESPORT Council of the Philippines headed by president Becky Garcia is staging its 5th Midyear Ranking and Competition Alaxan Cup on July 14 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. This year promises to be a big event with dancesport athletes participating from all over the country in several categories in the two dancesport disciplines—Standard and Latin American. International coach and adjudicator Wolfgang Opitz will conduct the two-day workshop on July 12 for Standard competitors and on July 13 for Latin competitors also at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

PBBY bookfair

THE PHILIPPINE Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) and Shangri-La Plaza Mall, in cooperation with Nido, shall mount the 3rd PBBY Children's Book Festival on July 14-22 at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall. The festival shall feature a children's book fair; storytelling and book signing sessions; an exhibit of children's book illustrators; and other activities. For more inquiries, call the PBBY Secretariat at 372-3548 or 49, or e-mail pdg@adarna.com.ph.

Circuit assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses

MANILA Circuit No. 4 of Jehovah's Witnesses will hold their two-day circuit assembly on July 14 and 15 at the Metro Manila Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses at 1140 President Quirino Highway, Kaligayahan, Novaliches, Quezon City. "Love God—not the things of the world" is the theme of the two-day circuit assembly, taken from 1 John 2:15-17 of the Holy Bible. The session will start at 8:50 a.m. Admission is free. Everyone is invited.

Jitse-Phil applications deadline

IT practitioners and students have until July 15 to submit their applic tions for the first Jitse-Phil or Japanese Information Technology Standard Examination of the Philippines, which will be simultaneously held at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City and the Univer sity of San Carlos in Talamban, Cebu on Sept. 9. Only 1,000 persons will be chosen to take the exam. Out of this number, 900 will come from Metro Manila and the remaining 100 from Cebu. The rigid selection process will be based on a predetermined demographic table such a age, sex and occupation.

Managing your MCIT and Nolco

By Antonio P. Bonilla
SGV & Co.

TAX-FILES

NOW is a good time to review the impact of the changes introduced in the Tax Reform Act of 1997.

Two of those innovations, which took effect on Jan. 1, 1998, are the minimum corporate income tax (MCIT) and the net operating loss carry over (Nolco). Interestingly enough, whether intended or not, these two provisions may intertwine in their impact on a corporation's end-of-the-year tax situation.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) has already issued Revenue Regulations No. 9-98 implementing the Tax Code's provisions on the MCIT. It has to issue the final regulations covering the Nolco.

To understand how such a relationship, or interaction if you will, may arise in the course of a corporate taxpayer's operations, let's revisit the principal features of the MCIT and the Nolco.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2000, the regular corporate income tax rate was set at 32 percent. Domestic companies and resident foreign corporations with respect to their Philippine activities, are subject to the regular corporate income tax; unless, they enjoy a special corporate income tax treatment.

Without having to enumerate all of those corporate taxpayers covered by a special income tax regime, it may be mentioned that those not subject to the MCIT include domestic corporations in nonprofit hospital operations or proprietary educational institutions, both of which are subject to 10-percent tax on their taxable income; and resident foreign corporations engaged in business as international carriers which are subject to tax at 2.5 percent of their gross Philippine billings.

Whereas the regular corporate income tax is 32 percent of the taxable net income, the MCIT is 2 percent of the gross income. Gross income as the tax base for the MCIT is defined in terms of the type of economic activity that the corporate taxpayer is engaged in. For trading or merchandising activities, gross income is defined as gross sales or receipts less sales returns, discounts and allowances and further deducted by the cost of goods sold (CGS). CGS is further defined to include the invoice cost of the goods sold, including the import duties imposed on such goods, freight and related transport costs incurred to bring the goods from suppliers to the place where these were actually sold, and insurance costs while the goods were in transit.

In the case of taxpayers engaged in manufacturing, gross income is still defined as above but CGS will include all costs of producing the finished goods; such as the costs of raw materials used, direct labor and manufacturing overhead, freight and insurance expenses, and other costs incurred to bring the raw materials to the factory or warehouse.

Finally, for those engaged in the sale of various types of services, gross income means gross receipts less sales returns, allowances and discounts and further deducted by the cost of providing such services. The cost of services shall include all direct costs and expenses necessarily incurred to provide the services required by the taxpayer's customers; such as salaries and employee benefits of personnel, consultants and specialists directly rendering the services, costs of the facilities directly utilized in rendering the services (that is, depreciation or rental of equipment used) and cost of supplies. Cost of services shall not include interest expenses, however, unless the taxpayer is a bank.

Thus, it will be seen that while the regular corporate income tax is a tax on net profits, the MCIT operates like a tax on gross profits. The MCIT shall be imposed on the fourth taxable year immediately following the taxable year when the corporation was registered with the BIR. Assuming the only source of income is the sale of its goods or services, a corporation would have to ascertain at the end of each taxable year, whether it would be subject to the lower tax bite of 2 percent of the MCIT but on a bigger tax base or the bigger tax bite of 32 percent of the regular corporate income tax but on a smaller tax base. Whenever both amounts are positive, the taxpayer will have to pay the MCIT only if it is greater in amount; and the taxpayer need not pay the regular corporate income tax. Where both amounts are equal for a given year, the taxpayer pays the regular corporate income tax due for that year. However, when the corporation has a zero or even negative net income (or net loss), in all likelihood it will have to pay the MCIT, which, by the manner it is defined and computed, will ordinarily be a positive amount because, conceivably, nobody sells or manufactures goods or provides services deliberately at prices below cost.

Any excess of the MCIT over the regular corporate income tax for a given taxable year can be carried forward and credited, but only against the regular income tax and only when the latter amount exceeds the MCIT in any of the next three immediately succeeding taxable years. In short, the excess MCIT cannot be credited against any MCIT liability. If no crediting can be made, such excess MCIT expires after the lapse of the 3-year carryover period, and would then be debited from the retained earnings of the corporation. Thus, it can be seen that while creditable, excess MCIT may be characterized as an advance payment of the taxpayer's regular corporate income tax, when and if the latter exceeds the MCIT for any of those three years. It can be likened to an interest-free advance made by a taxpayer to the government.

Where a corporate taxpayer can forecast a positive profit picture, gross or net, for the next three years, and its historical experience shows a consistent pattern of the fairly close amounts of the MCIT and regular corporate income tax, the corporation may manage its income tax liabilities through effective tax planning. Thus, if it prefers the lower tax bite of the MCIT, it may be able to shift some of its costs from one tax base to the other. After the accumulation of creditable excess MCIT for three years, it may then shift back some of its costs in the next three years to become liable for the regular corporate income tax and use its excess MCIT to reduce its overall tax burden for an entire 6-year period.

On the other hand, in the extreme case of a taxpayer anticipating continuing losses for the next three years, it need not necessarily be stuck with paying the MCIT all throughout if it can establish and prove to the secretary of finance, together with the BIR commissioner's recommendation, that such losses have arisen by reason of any of three causes. These are: (1) a prolonged labor dispute lasting more than six months within a given tax year and which dispute has resulted in the temporary shutdown of operations; or (2) force majeure, which covers unforeseen events beyond the taxpayer's control, such as natural calamities or even armed conflicts like war or insurgency; or (3) legitimate business reversals arising from causes such as when a government agency may place the corporation under receivership proceedings or temporarily suspend its operations; or other similar economic reasons that may be determined by the secretary of finance.

However, where such losses cannot be attributed to any of the foregoing causes, the corporation will be paying the MCIT. But, at the same time, it will derive the tax advantage of having Nolco in its accounts.

As provided in the Tax Code, the Nolco becomes an additional deductible item from a corporation's income, similar to such items as ordinary and necessary business expenses like labor costs, interest expenses, depreciation and charitable donations. However, as formulated in the Tax Code, only the excess that remains from all allowable deductions from a corporation's gross income, or the resulting net loss, can be carried over as an additional deductible item from the corporation's gross income in the next immediately succeeding three taxable years. The result of this formulation is that a corporation would register, at most, a zero net income; not a negative net income at the end of a taxable year. Similar to the excess but uncredited MCIT, the Nolco when unutilized as a deductible item by the end of the 3-year carryover period, expires as a deductible item. The exception to this rule are mining companies, other than those involved in oil and gas, which may, provided they do not enjoy incentives under the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, carry over any Nolco incurred in any of the first 10 years of operation, for the immediately following five years.

What happens then for a corporation with both Nolco and excess MCIT carryovers? Faced with the prospect of a net taxable income that will result in a regular corporate income tax due that is greater than the corresponding MCIT for a given tax year, a corporation may be better off postponing its use of the Nolco in the meantime and credit its carryover MCIT against its regular income tax. This will enable the corporation to use one year's MCIT payments twice or for two tax years. As analyzed earlier, the MCIT partakes of the nature of an advance collection of income tax by the government. The unutilized Nolco may then be still available as a deductible item from gross income, at least for the next two years. Under the Tax Code, however, the Nolco of a particular corporation shall not be allowed as a carryover once the corporation's original owners lose more than 25 percent (or fail to retain at least 75 percent) of their ownership, whether directly or indirectly, in said corporation by reason of mergers or consolidations, for instance. This percentage is measured in the case of a corporation, in terms of the nominal or par value of its outstanding issued shares or its paid-up capital. This 75 percent rule was imposed in the Tax Reform Act of 1997 presumably to inhibit, if not eliminate, the practice of very profitable corporations of acquiring losing corporations for no other reason than to use the latter's losses to reduce the profitable corporation's income tax liabilities. Unfortunately, this purpose of the law may be neutralized by the fact that the same 75 percent substantial ownership rule does not apply to the MCIT. Evidently, a losing corporation would not only be accumulating Nolco but also excess MCIT precisely because it would still be paying the MCIT even if it would not be liable for the regular corporate income tax. A merger or consolidation, even if resulting in substantial ownership change, would not prevent the transfer of such excess MCIT credits from the losing corporation to the acquiring profitable corporation by reason of the operation of the law on mergers and consolidations in the Corporation Code. Thus, if only for such excess MCIT credits may a losing corporation remain an attractive tax shelter, and hence, target for corporate acquisitions. In corporate taxation, losses can still be wins.

GOES WHOLESALE, CREATES ENTREPRENEURS

Third generation turns 55-year-old firm around

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

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THE AMON group changed its corporate outlook to become more customer-oriented.

MANY companies do not put too much emphasis on customer relations because of the view that it is expensive to invest in customer satisfaction and the returns are hard to quantify anyway.

For Amon Trading, however, the decision to overhaul the 55-year-old trading firm to suit the changing tastes of its customers and generate revenues became its ticket to survival, and eventually growth.

Amon Trading was founded in 1945 as a hardware materials trading firm. It has been a distributor of imported products such as Black and Decker, and specialty paints in Manila and other key cities such as Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Bacolod and Cagayan de Oro.

Victim of crisis

Amon president Alejandro Recto said in a presentation during the Customer Contact World conference at the Shangri-la Makati that the Amon group changed its corporate outlook to become more customer-oriented because it saw that it was the only way to put the company back on track.

Recto belongs to the third generation of his family, the founders of Amon, and was responsible for redirecting the business focus into a more wholesale oriented business from its historically retail origin.

From 1995-1997, Amon Marketing operated 12 outlets but these were not doing well. Development and overhead costs jumped 200 percent due to rent and maintenance costs. It could not replenish fast moving items due to weak cash position, and trucking all supplies from the main office was virtually impossible. Seven of the outlets had to be closed.

Because of the shutdowns, Amon's image was heavily damaged. Customers and competitors thought Amon closed shop.

"With severe cash flow problems and an inventory line-up of old and out-of-fashion products, Amon needed a major change in its business strategy. Naturally, the morale of the employees was at its lowest level thus infighting and stealing prevailed," Recto said.

With all these problems facing Amon Marketing, it had to make a decision, and it saw that the answer lay with customer relationship.

Recto saw the opportunity to revive the operations by embarking on a bold business shift toward building an exclusive wholesale operations network. This meant building a new network of customers, establishing new product lines and most of all exploring new and exciting trends in product advertising.

As part of establishing a new identity, Amon Trading moved its materials trading operations to a subsidiary that became known as Amon Marketing. Today, Amon Marketing boasts of a nationwide network of 2,000 small and medium dealers as well as wholesalers who avail of its new approach in selling coined as "consultative selling."

Time for change

This means being responsible for strategic problem solving with customers and empowering your workforce. A team leader is responsible for the success of its members.

On the part of the sales force, they were trained to ask questions and understand the needs of the customers rather than just buying requirements or taking orders.

They were involved in discussing projects, dealing with potential competitors and to anticipate future needs.

"Salesmen as well as non-sales personnel had to relearn the product qualities together with the service requirements as part of the educational program," Recto said.

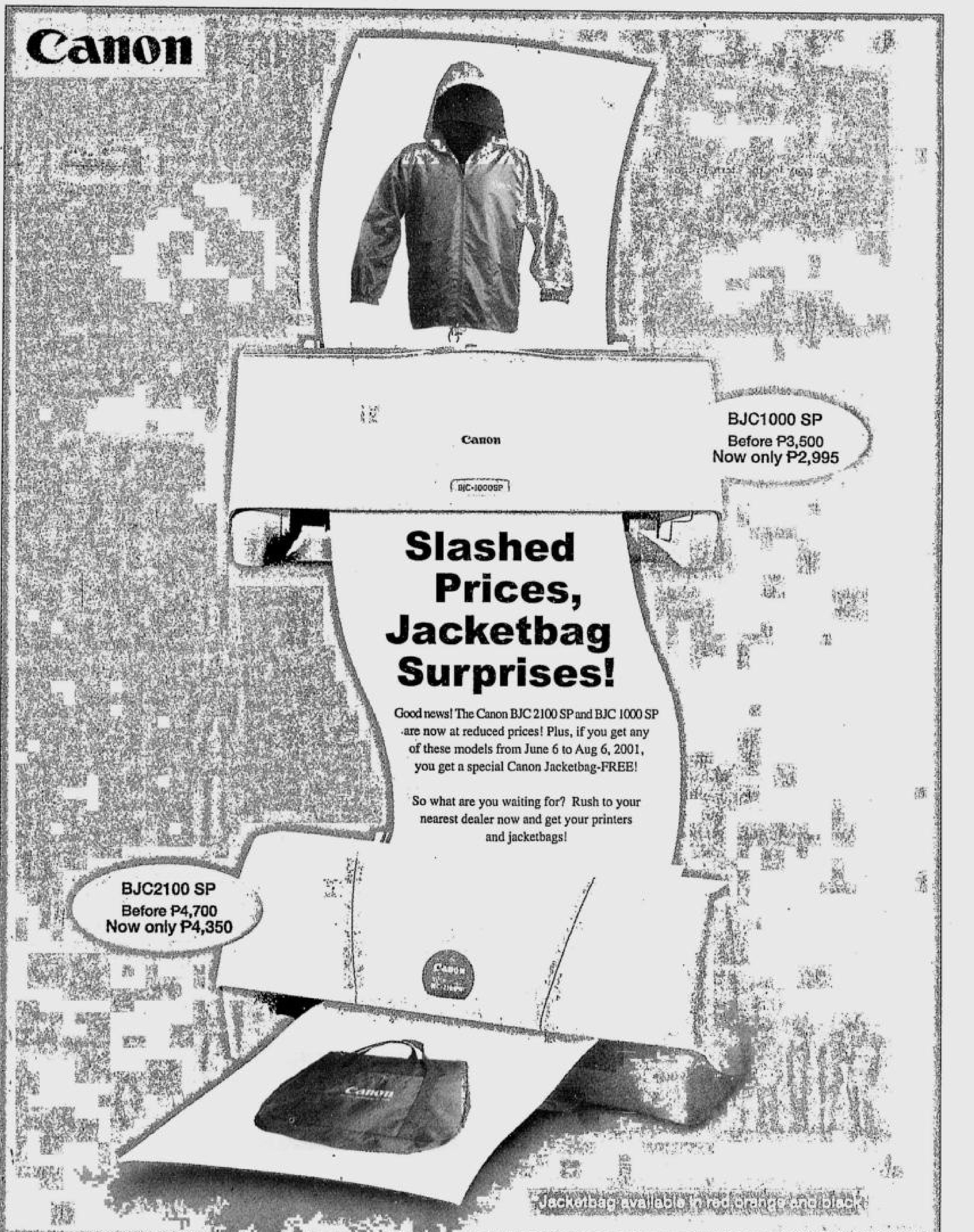
The vision was that customers are partners—the long-term ally. This was complemented by the company's decision to reduce the work force from 200 to only 40.

Amon Marketing likewise invested in a customer relationship management database to further delve into the nuances of the customers.

The database provided basic information, area analysis, details of customer preferences, competitive data and charting.

In summary, Recto said "the major changes that we have instigated can be drawn from these successful pillars of successful management—education and information, communication, teamwork and trust, and empowerment."

"Sales people have to be better at everything than they used to be—more technically knowledgeable, good negotiators, good problem solvers. There is a trend toward sales people offering a more complete service to customers, more of an entrepreneur . . . rather than a salesperson," Recto concluded, based on a quote from a customer.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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1648 series of 2001

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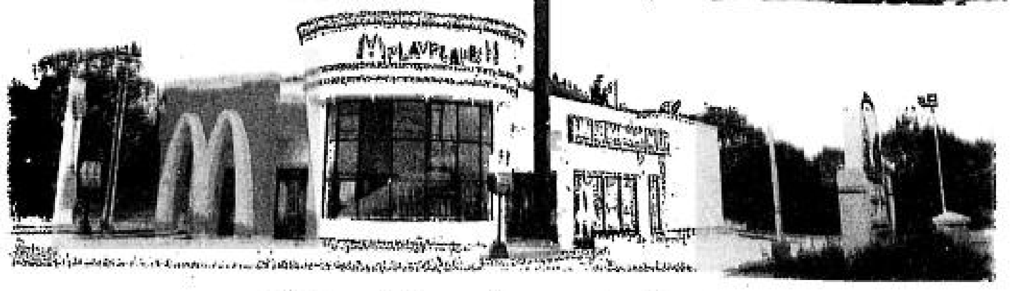

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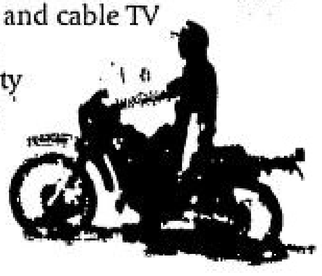

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Gardening rekindles his faith

At Home

By Adrian Lizares
Photos by Chito Vecina
Pictorial direction by Albert Avellana

I HAD the pleasure of visiting the garden of Rodrigo de los Reyes in Tagaytay City. Ding, as he is known to his peers and family, is the former CEO and president of Philamlife and Far East Bank and Trust Co. Having retired from business, he now devotes his time to family and personal activities. I caught him in his garden and would like to share with you his insights on plants, gardens and the joys of life.

Can you give a brief description of your garden in Tagaytay?

The original land area was 10,000 sq m, but I had to acquire an additional 2,500 sq m on the south side (down the ridge) of the property to protect ourselves from the activities of "slash and burn" farmer or *kaingineros* who indiscriminately burn dried brush some 1,500 ft below to clear land for cash crop planting.

Fanned by strong winds from the lake below, the flames would roar over the ridge of the old volcanic crater and burn everything in its path as it curves over the rim. I built a wall below to stop the flames and planted the area in between with leafy trees to cushion the impact of the flames.

What determines

GARDENING/p.C2

RODRIGO de los Reyes in his element

MSD HEALTH NEWS

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is important for everyone, but particularly for people with arthritis. If you have osteoarthritis, controlling your weight is very important as it helps to reduce strain on vulnerable joints like the knees and hips. By following guidelines for a healthy diet you can help yourself to lose weight and maintain a good overall level of health. For some types of arthritis (particularly gout), the right diet (low in protein) may also help to reduce your symptoms.

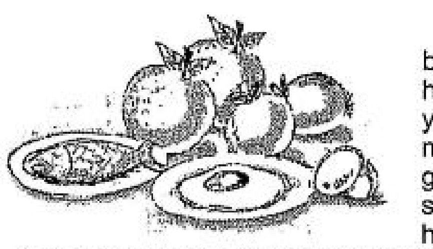
Why is weight control important for people with arthritis?

Weight control is particularly important for people with arthritis, especially osteoarthritis - a link has been found between obesity and the progression of osteoarthritis. Being overweight increases the stress on joints like the knees and hips. If these joints already have osteoarthritis, increased weight can make them more painful.

On the other hand, losing weight can reduce the strain on these joints which in turn can reduce pain. Some research suggests that losing weight can help prevent people with osteoarthritis from developing symptoms. In one U.S. study in 1992, researchers showed that overweight women, middle-aged or older, with osteoarthritis in the knee could substantially reduce their risk for developing symptomatic osteoarthritis by losing weight. By losing approximately 11 pounds (5 kilograms) over a 10-year period, the study showed that an overweight woman could reduce her risk of developing symptoms of knee osteoarthritis by 50%.

Are You In Control Of Your Osteoarthritis?

How can eating a healthy, balanced diet help arthritis?



Eating a balanced diet will help in controlling your weight and maintaining a good overall standard of health. Eating a balanced, varied diet will help ensure that your joints (especially the knee) can benefit from all the vitamins and minerals that are needed to keep them healthy, and may help to slow down the underlying disease processes in arthritis.

In knee osteoarthritis, for example, diets rich in vitamin C and vitamin D may be helpful in slowing down the progression of the disease, and reducing the amount of joint pain, particularly in the knee.

People with gout need to pay particular attention to their weight, and are encouraged to restrict the amount of alcohol they drink. Food substances called purines may increase the amount of uric acid in the body, and by doing so, may trigger the pain and inflammation of an affected joint. Cutting down on shellfish, internal meats, yeast, herrings and bacon, all of which are high in purines, is recommended. If you suffer from gout, you should drink plenty of low-calorie, non-alcoholic fluids (between 2 and 3 liters per day) to keep your kidneys healthy and reduce the concentrations of uric acid in your blood.

Finally, some studies have shown that fish oils contain a substance (called a fatty acid) that may be beneficial in rheumatoid arthritis. The use of a fish oil dietary supplement may be suggested by some medical teams.

How is osteoarthritis managed?

Osteoarthritis is usually managed using a combination of:

- Education about the disease
- Weight control (if obesity is a problem)
- Physical therapy to strengthen and mobilize joints
- Aerobic exercise to increase overall fitness and aid with weight loss
- Medication to control pain and reduce inflammation
- Surgery if the damage to the joint is severe

What are the treatment options?

If your doctor determines that you need to include medication in your treatment program, he or she may suggest a mild analgesic (pain-killer) such as aspirin, acetaminophen/paracetamol or prescribe an NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug) to help reduce your pain. NSAIDs work to reduce the inflammation, pain and swelling of arthritis.

Occasional use of analgesics or NSAIDs usually do not cause problems, but if you take larger doses or your treatment extends for a long period of time, some of you might experience some side effects. Many people taking NSAIDs experience some sort of stomach upset. This might be for some of you, a bloated feeling, gas, heartburn or stomach ache and there could also be constipation, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting. If you experience any unexpected effects, signs or symptoms from your medication or whenever you have any questions regarding your medication, you should contact your doctor without hesitation.

Alternatively, your doctor may prescribe you with newer medications that may be better tolerated. A new class of medicines, called COX-2 inhibitors (Coxibs), has been developed to treat arthritis pain and inflammation. These compounds have been designed to block the action of COX-2 only, leaving the important function of COX-1 intact. This selective action on COX-2 results in potentially better tolerated pain relief. For example, rofecoxib, a medicine belonging to the Coxib class, provided relief from arthritis pain and inflammation with significantly fewer severe stomach side effects compared to other studied NSAIDs as shown in clinical studies. Rofecoxib is also the only COX-2 inhibitor approved for relief of acute pain by the United States Food and Drug Administration (U.S. FDA) and the Philippine Bureau of Food and Drugs. Like with all long-term treatment with common pain relievers, however, if you experience unexpected effects like kidney problems, water retention or increases in blood pressure while taking Coxibs, you should consult your doctor right away.

The exact treatment you will receive will depend upon the severity of your condition and how much your lifestyle is affected by your arthritis. Whatever form of treatment you receive, it is very important that you understand what it is for, what you can expect from it and how it will help your arthritis. Understanding these things will help you to take a more active role in your own treatment, to feel more in control of the disease and to get the most benefit from your treatment program.

For more information about osteoarthritis and its treatment, consult your doctor. For other concerns, you may call the MSD Customer Call Center at 878-6338. For outside Metro Manila, call (toll-free) 1-800-1-888-6737.

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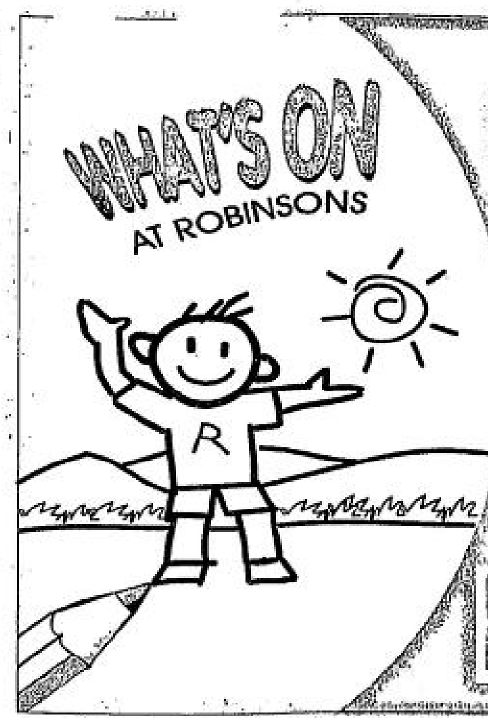

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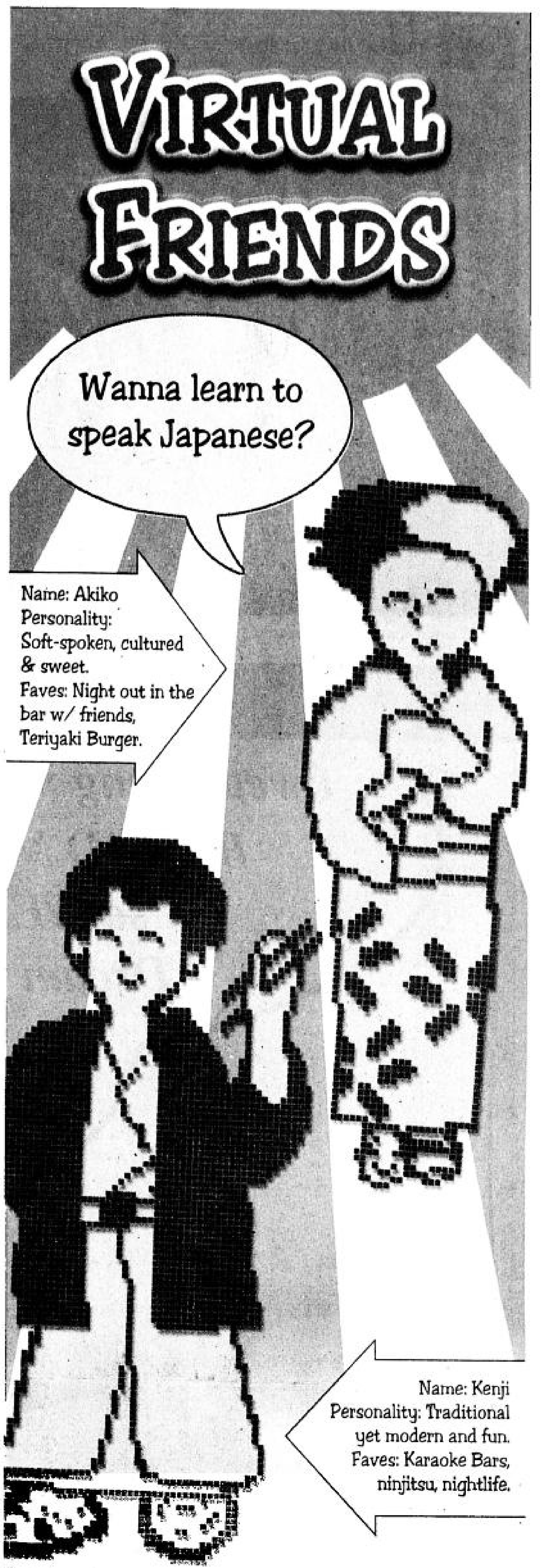

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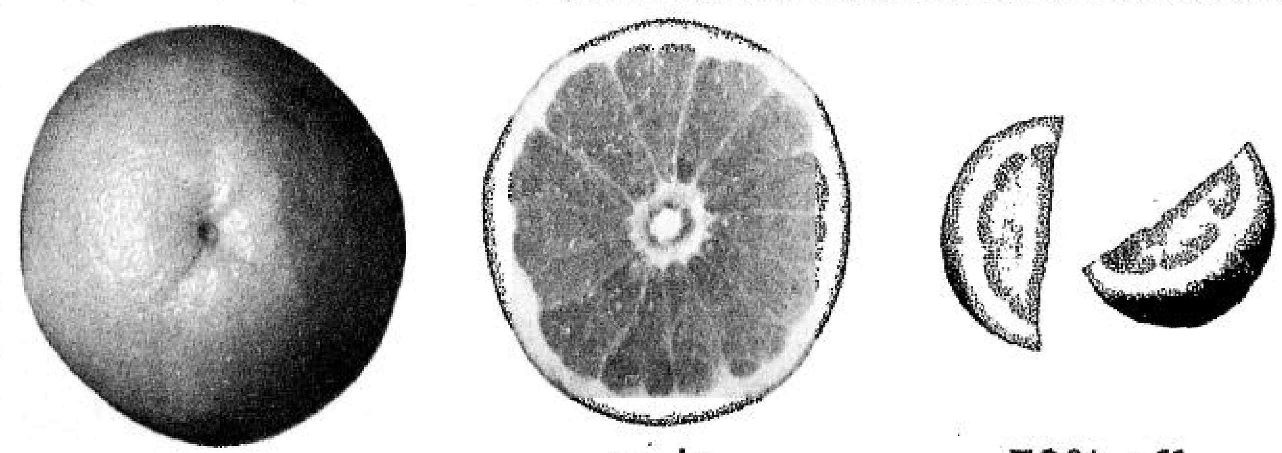

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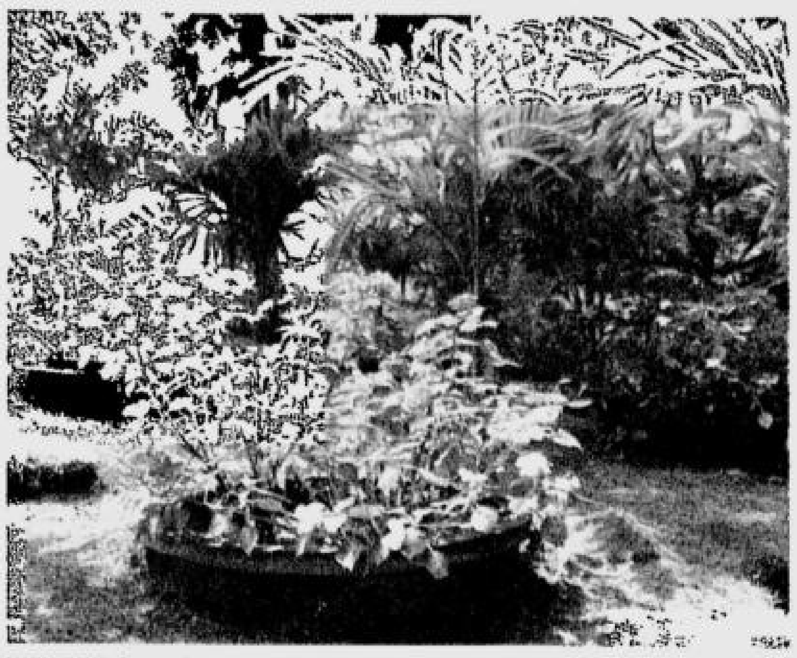
GROUPINGS

SNOW white and the sanseverias

ASSORTMENT of sword leaves



POTTED impatiens thriving in the shade

Gardening rekindles his faith

(From page C1)

your choice of plants?

In Tagaytay, as well as in the adjacent areas, the choice of plants is dictated by the following conditions:

● Availability of water. Water supply until now is limited. I solved the problem by building underground cisterns and ground tanks to hold water.

But there is a limit to how much they can hold, and even in Tagaytay, plants do dry up for lack of water.

● Contour and location of the land. More often than not, the occasional visitor will find the wind in Tagaytay relatively mild. This can be deceiving. Just imagine a heavy rain cloud floating serenely over Taal Lake at 2,000 ft above sea level. Within minutes, that same cloud approaches the ridge of Tagaytay at a height of only a few hundred feet. The funnel effect it creates increases the force of the wind so that tree branches and even trunks measuring 12-18" in diameter can break like matchsticks. The clouds carry electric charges, too, which, in the form of lightning, can burn and split tall trees in seconds.

If you are on the "ridge," avoid eucalyptus, Indian and *talisay* trees. They seem to attract lightning.

● Amount of rainfall in your area. In the plains, rainfall is usually predictable. In the vicinity of the lake, you will learn to determine the amount of rainfall only from experience.

I planted trees whose branches bent with the wind, plants that were sturdy but short, and flowering ornamentals because they were not only short but also moved with the wind. I also planted large bamboos along the windy side of my property because they made an excellent and long-lasting windbreaker.

How did you arrange your plants and flowerbeds?

The wind factor and the relative position of the sun at different hours of the day were primary considerations. I also took into account the possibility that the water supply could be cut off for days at a time. The area with the most plants is on the east because the morning sun is "kinder" to the plants. The sun on the west side is a bit harsher. It can be very intense from late morning onward.

I also consider the western side, the portion that slopes down from the "ruins," as my "development" area. I hope to build a swimming pool and other amenities in this area so I laid out the plants with this in mind. Further west of the property, I intend to build individual rest houses for my five children. You must have noted that the landscaping is already there.

How did you become interested in plants and gardens?

In 1950, barely three years after our marriage, my wife Nilda contracted poliomyelitis. She survived, the "iron lung" being just outside her hospital room, but the residual paralysis prevented her from ever walking for the rest of her natural life.

The period of reconstruction took many years and the farthest we got was to put her on a collapsible wheel chair which somebody could push or, hopefully, she can maneuver on her own in time. We realized we needed not only a "disabled-friendly" house but also a large garden that would be her private park. This was our introduction to plants and gardening.

When she died in 1994, I ended all business activities and dedicated myself completely to helping my children and using all my spare time developing things that Nilda might have wanted if she were alive today. Gardening, aside from a few other family activities, was "top" priority.

What inspired you to do this garden?

My late mother was an avid gardener and, in the years immediately after World War II, she would wake up around midnight when the water pressure was strongest to water her plants. She was happiest when all the leaves of her plants were bathed in lots of water.

I took a fancy to plants, not really gardening, when I noted a tiny sapling—nothing exceptional—growing in our garden. I would look at the plant every day before leaving for the office and marvel at nature. I started to grow plants from seeds and seedlings for the pleasure of successfully growing something. I started to think of the plant as some other project I had started from scratch as it became healthy and robust, growing taller and stronger every day.

In my job, I needed to be success-oriented and

GARDENING/p.C4

ASIATIC lily atop a pygmy date palm

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF WESTERN UNION DREAM HOME PRIZE DRAW

1. Ang Raffle Promo ay magsisimula sa May 30, 2001 hanggang March 18, 2002. Mga international money transfer na ipinadala at natanggap lamang ng sinumang Filipino citizens of legal age mula sa mga kasaling Western Union agent locations sa Metro Manila ang puwedeng isali sa prize draw.
2. Sa unang pagtanggap ng iyong pamilya o kaibigan ng international money transfer na galing sa iyo sa kahit saan mang participating Western Union agent location sa Metro Manila ay mabibigyan sila ng Western Union Pass Book at malalagyan ng isang sticker ang kanilang Passbook.
3. Sa bawat pagtanggap nila ng international money transfer ay malalagyan ng isang sticker ang kanilang Passbook.
4. Kapag may tatlong stickers na ang kanilang Passbook at na-validate na ito ng participating WU agent sa Metro Manila ay papupuntahin sila sa fulfillment centers para ibigay ang kanilang Pass Book.
5. Sa fulfillment center ay pupunitin ang kalahating pahina ng passbook na may tatlong stickers at ang booklet na may raffle coupon ay isosoli sa customers kasama ng free gift na kanilang pipiliin (cups, K-wallets, T-shirts o phonebook).
6. Puwede na silang sumali sa Western Union DREAM HOME PRIZE DRAW. Mga kumpletong certificate lamang ng iyong qualified receiver (tatlong validated stickers kasama ang kanilang pangalan, address, telephone number, at signature), ang puwedeng isali sa prize draw.
7. Di maaaring ilipat ang mga stickers na natanggap ng iyong receiver (halimbawa: hindi tatanggapin ng fulfillment centers ang tatlong certificates na may tig-iisang sticker lamang).
8. Makakakuha lamang ng free gift pag nakakumpleto ng tatlong stickers sa Western Union Passbook.
9. Para makasali sa prize draw, dapat maghulog ang iyong receiver ng validated certificate sa drop box sa fulfillment center isang linggo bago ang scheduled na prize draw.
10. Kapag ito ay di umabot, ang validated certificate ay isasali sa susunod na raffle draw.
11. Tatlong DREAM HOME raffle draws na gaganapin sa 11/F JMT Corporate Condominium Office, ADB Ave, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, sa mga sumusunod na araw:

    August 24, 2001 (12:00 ng tanghali)
    November 23, 2001 (12:00 ng tanghali)
    March 18, 2002 (12: 00 ng tanghali)
12. Ang WESTERN UNION Dream Home Promotion winner ay kailangang Filipino citizen of legal age.
13. Ang mananalo sa bawat DREAM HOME prize draw ay siyang dapat na nakapangalang receiver sa tatlong qualifying international money transfers na isinali.
14. Ipaaalam ng Western Union sa DREAM HOME winner ang kanyang pagkapanalo sa loob ng 48 hours ng prize draw sa pamamagitan ng Registered Mail.
15. Ang mga hindi mananalong entries ay isasama sa mga susunod na draws.
16. Ipagbibigay alam sa mga nanalo ang petsa ng awarding ceremony na gaganapin sa lugar ng house and lot na premyo.
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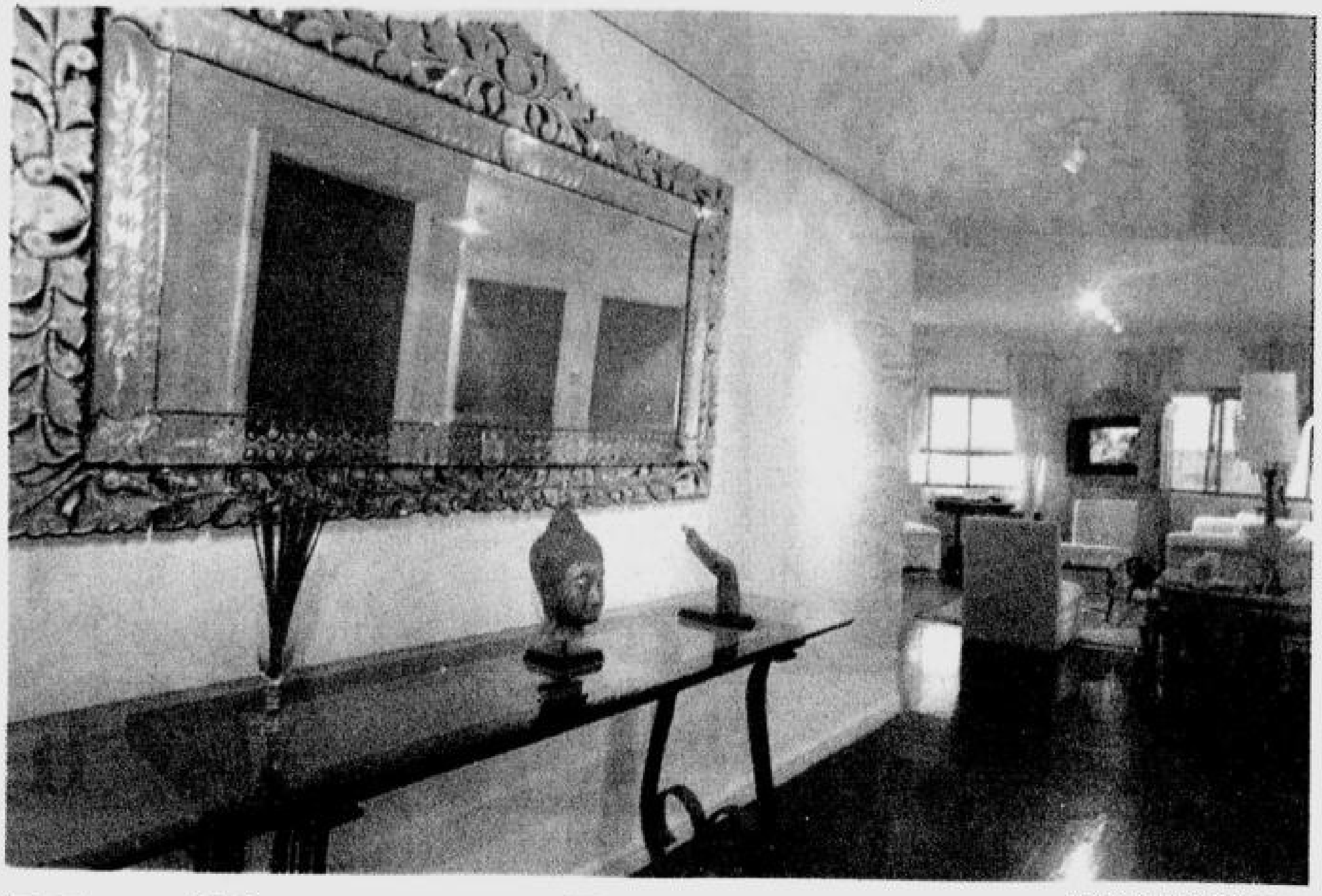


Feeling at home with Tessie Tomas

THE DECOR theme is consistent from the foyer to the living room. Viennese mirror to expand the space, choice furniture and Asian pieces.

By Leah Salterio
Photos by Bobot Meru

TESSIE and Roger Pullin

PHOTO BY ART DE LA ROSA

HOSTING the weekly show "Feel at Home" on ABS-CBN has made Tessie Tomas more conscious about her own abode. Seeing the different homes of other people has also given her the flair for constantly refurbishing her own place.

Her condo unit in Makati is a testament to Tessie's fancy but elegant taste for home living. Despite her busy schedule, she spends at least three hours a week to check on the house. She calls on the building repair man if a bulb on the big chandelier hovering on the dining table is busted. She sees one of the track lights in the ceiling missing and immediately gets it replaced.

She sends her assistant to Dangwa to buy fresh flowers for the living room and the dining area.

"Eclectic and not predictable" is how Tessie describes her style for home living.

"This is very Zen," she says of her home. "With a small place like this, you got to have a minimalist style."

Tessie gives credit to her only son, Robin, for taste. When the house underwent renovation last year, mother and son were both at work on the makeover.

The old beige color of the living room walls was changed into apple green. The doors, meanwhile, were texture-painted in moss green. The floor tiles were changed into black narra parquet.

The interiors were done by Manuel Villafania, Robin's former officemate at Ace Saatchi.

Revolutionary design

"Initially, I thought the design was too revolutionary for our taste," Tessie allows. "But Robin convinced me to trust Manuel. They showed me photos of unconventional houses and I was persuaded to modify our place."

The trio went all the way to Bangkok to scout for accoutrements and other neat trappings that will go with the new motif of the house.

Yards of light green Thai silk were bought for the drapes, while a different Thai silk cloth in monochromatic green hue was used for the upholstery of the living room set.

The other chairs were reshaped into Donna Karan-type furniture, while the dining set chairs were reupholstered in off-white.

Interestingly, a red couch stands out in the dining room, alongside other chairs.

Even the bathroom is in flaming red.

"Red is my input," Tessie beams. "I always want an element of surprise for the home."

The floor was changed into black narra parquet.

Aside from the drapes, the windows of the condo unit have Roman bamboo shades, that Tessie bought from Alenzuela Handicrafts.

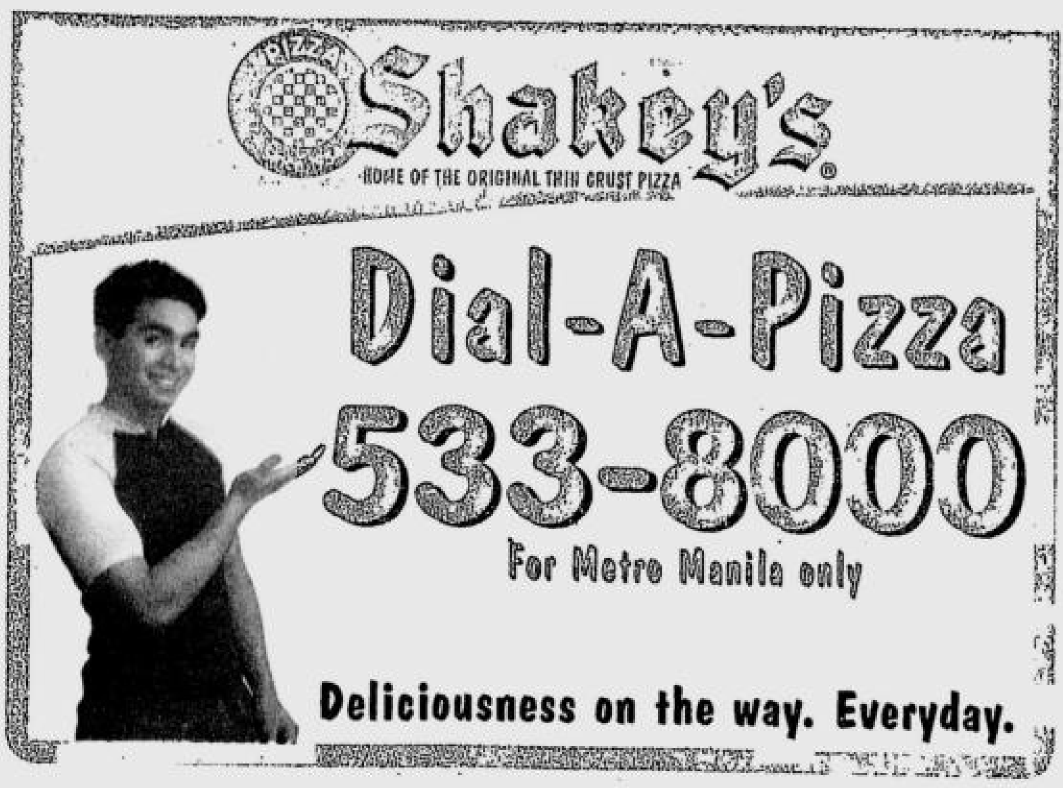
"That's how Robin wants it," she says.

A huge mirror with Italian gold leaf border looms in the living room. Tiny track lights with dimmers are used on ceilings, instead of the conventional bulbs or fluorescent lamps.

At night, however, Tessie prefers to light the scented candles scattered around the house.

"I use the candles because they're therapeutic and Oriental. They also give that soothing or romantic feel."

FEELING/p.C6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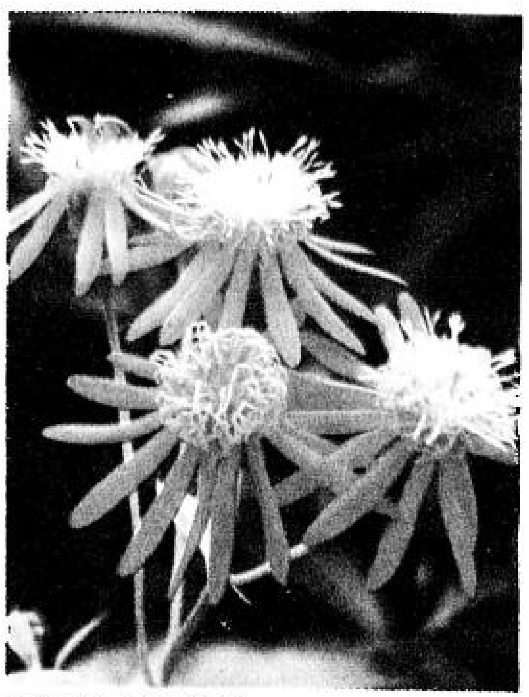
VIOLET velvet



POLLINATOR plant

ORANGE-SCENTED jasmine

FLORIFEROUS hibiscus

Gardening rekindles his faith

> ‘I built my own Camelot. You, too, can do the same as long as you believe that whatever you have is your own Camelot’

(From page C1)

motivated and even the smallest of successes, like the flowering of a plant that I had grown from a seed, was all the "high" that I needed to set a good mood for the day.

Many people see plants while they are in small pots. They may look nice enough as they are. I have learned, however, that if you plant them on the ground and give them all the room and incentive to grow, you can create a real beauty that you might not have thought possible when you saw the small potted plant.

I am a nature man, too, and I like nothing better than being with my plants in my garden. You treat them well and they respond accordingly. In a garden, nothing remains the same. Almost overnight there are changes. Plants also attract butterflies, crickets and all types of birds.

What lessons have you learned from gardening that you can share with our readers?

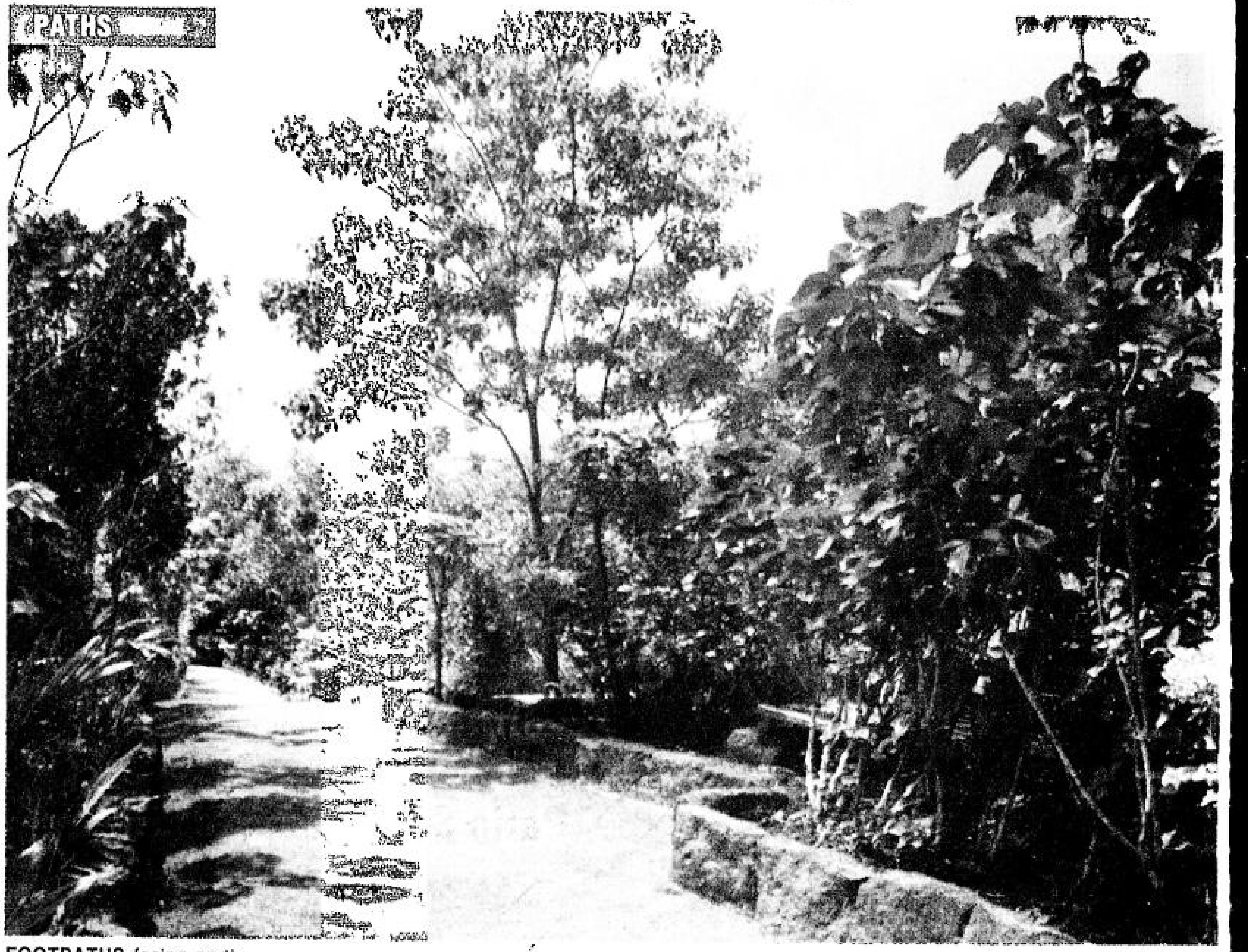
In the physical sense, take chances. Plant anything and everything you desire. You can rearrange them later to suit your needs. You can even create a "plant bank" so that you can grow plants under the most ideal conditions, move them, rearrange them and group them as you wish. You can keep "fine-tuning" your garden because the environment changes constantly. Sun-starved plants will wither and you change them with species that love the shade.

What pleasures do you derive from your garden?

I was not really spiritual even in my younger years. I loved sports, entertainment and movies. It was only in my later years and after visiting far-flung corners that I developed a liking for nature and the things that go with it.

In the early '50s, I made a visit to Marawi City, which overlooks Dansalan Lake. The trip from Iligan City took longer than expected, so we arrived in Marawi at sunset. The scenery was splendid. Nothing seemed to disturb, not even the clouds, the serenity and hushed environment. This, by itself, was already awe-inspiring but, suddenly, we heard the soft beating of the *agong* drums, pulsating across the calm lake, announcing that it was time for prayer. Other drums in neighboring communities picked up the rhythm moving further down the lake and the sounds moved farther and became fainter.

From that moment on, I became a nature lover.



FOOTPATHS facing north

...FACING south

Communion with nature led to other things much more spiritual because I saw the hand of God in what I had seen and observed.

I also note this when I walk in the garden in the early morning to watch the light of dawn. The effect of the first sun rays on the low-flying clouds can best be described as magical but the problem with mornings is that the moment of magic is so very brief. It does not take long before the fierce sun transforms everything into bright and even dazzling light.

Late afternoons are the best. The bright sunlight is transformed into so many varied hues, growing finer and mellower with each second. Sounds from awakening insects seem to permeate the now cool air and even the sound of passing motor cars are now muted.

Peace fills the land as the first morning rays flicker in the distance. There is a momentary darkness and then, suddenly, the skies that were dark only moments before are bathed in light from stars that are suddenly visible.

This is when I become completely spiritual. The hand of creation is evident. I know that there is a God and that He is responsible for all this. My garden is among the things that help me brush aside, even for a moment, what is sordid, dirty, demeaning and unjust in this world.

I know I built myself my own "Camelot." You, too, can do the same as long as you believe that whatever you have, no matter how modest, is your own "Camelot."

Where do you buy your plants?

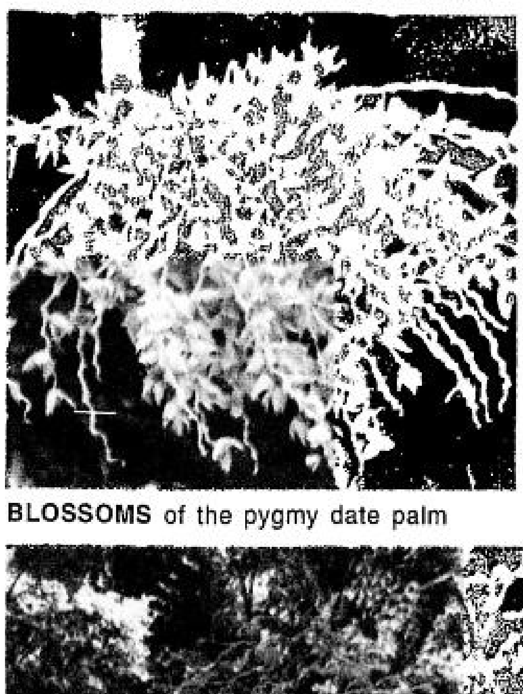
In the early years, I got most of them in plant gardens around Manila. I eventually zeroed in on the Calamba-Los Baños area in Laguna and Silang in Cavite. Lately, I have been scrounging around the areas closer to Tagaytay where new plant gardens are opening.

I have also become friends with smaller plant shop owners who are also collectors. I come across some good plants from them every now and then but usually, when I see them, the conversation is always much better.

Any tips for other garden lovers?

If you have a seed and do not know what it is, plant it and find out. The waiting will give you patience. You will learn to hope, say a few prayers, too, and display unusual exuberance when the first leaf appears. If a shop has a seedling but they do not know what it is, buy it anyway. It would not have been in the shop if they did not think it was of some value. Some of my best plants came via this route and when you win, you could win big!

E-mail the author at adjie@pacific.net.ph



BLOSSOMS of the pygmy date palm

MULBERRY tree at post-inflorescence

CLIMBER. The big-leafed philodendron

CLERODENDRON pagoda plant provides shade for a juvenile auracaria (right)

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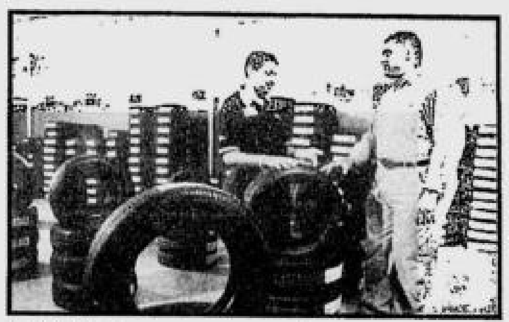
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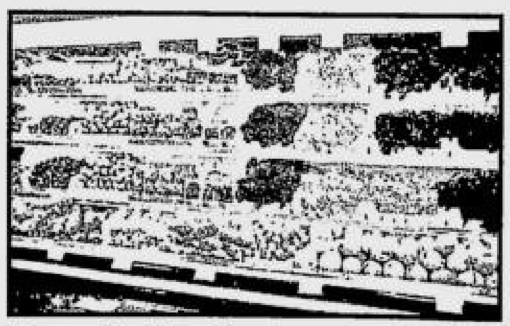
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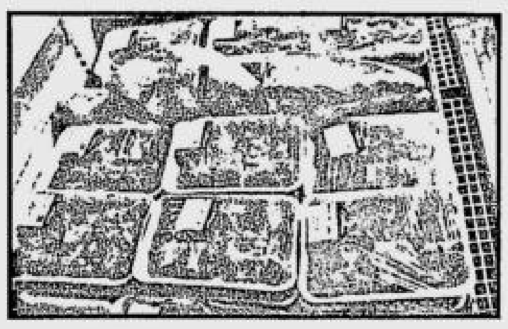
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Feeling at home with Tessie Tomas

(From page C3)

Of course, Tessie shares the house with her husband, Roger Pullin, a fish biologist by profession who has made a career in the local entertainment scene as a singer and recording artist.

The couple bought the condo unit in 1994 after they got married.

One room has been converted into Roger's workstation, where wooden fish, books and music sheets are in a happy clutter. It also has a mini-recording studio.

Art pieces

Now that Robin has decided to stay in New York, where he's enrolled at the Parsons Institute of Fashion Design, Tessie wants to convert his room into a meditation nook with a retro bathroom.

Tessie says she likes to buy little things for the house. So from her travels in and out of the country, she has accrued all sorts of items, which are displayed around the condo.

From Thailand, she brought home a wooden Buddha, which serves as the centerpiece of a long rectangular table below a Belgian mirror in the receiving area. Beside the Buddha is another art piece from the Chatuchak market in Bangkok.

A different Buddha from the Portobello flea market in London stands alongside Roger's little jade Buddha sitting on a chest. Both pieces are on top of the center table in the living room. The table is made of glass and wrought iron from Arte Español, where Tessie also got her dining table.

Coffee-table books on "100 Women of the Philippines" and "Philippine Ancestral Weave" are the only reading materials in the living room area.

A wooden TV cabinet from Baguio, an antique divider from Indonesia and an antique Chinese table from Tessie's mom, Laura Hermosa, are the other furnishings in the living room.

A geometric clock stands outside the master bedroom, a gift from Roger's daughters. Adjacent to it is an antique chest given by Tweetums Gonzalez. On top of the chest is Robin's oil painting of a gondola in Venice.

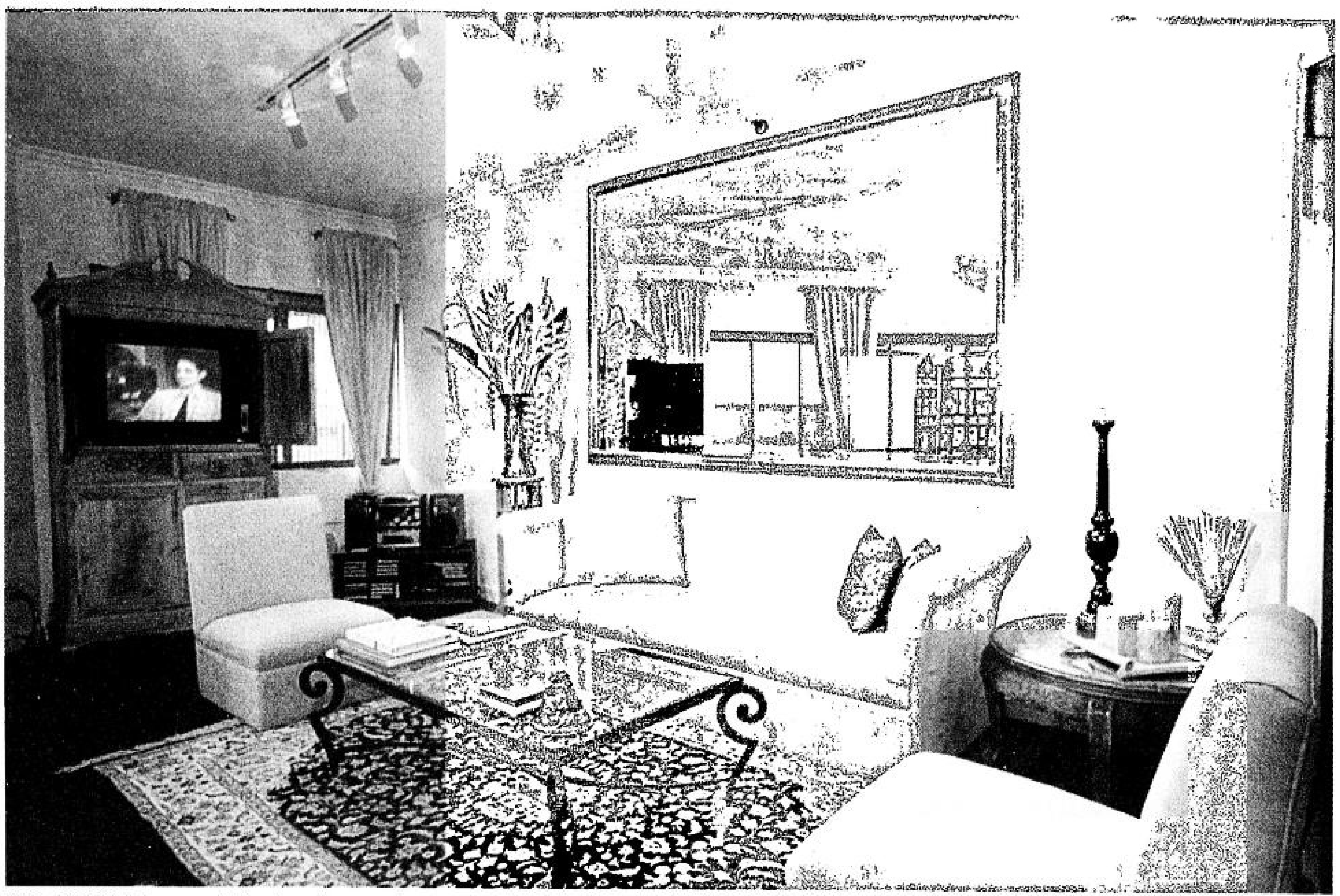
Tessie also buys house decors from local shops. The chandeliers in the dining area and bathroom were bought from Makati Cinema Square, while a lampshade was purchased from Old Asia. Noted artist-potter Ugu Bigyan from Quezon gifted Tessie with one of his works when she interviewed him for her weekly show.

The only TV set in the condo is the one in the living room.

"Roger doesn't want a TV or phone inside the bedroom because that's where we talk," Tessie explains. "After 9:30 p.m., we don't take calls anymore. If it's Robin calling from the US, he simply leaves a message in the answering machine."

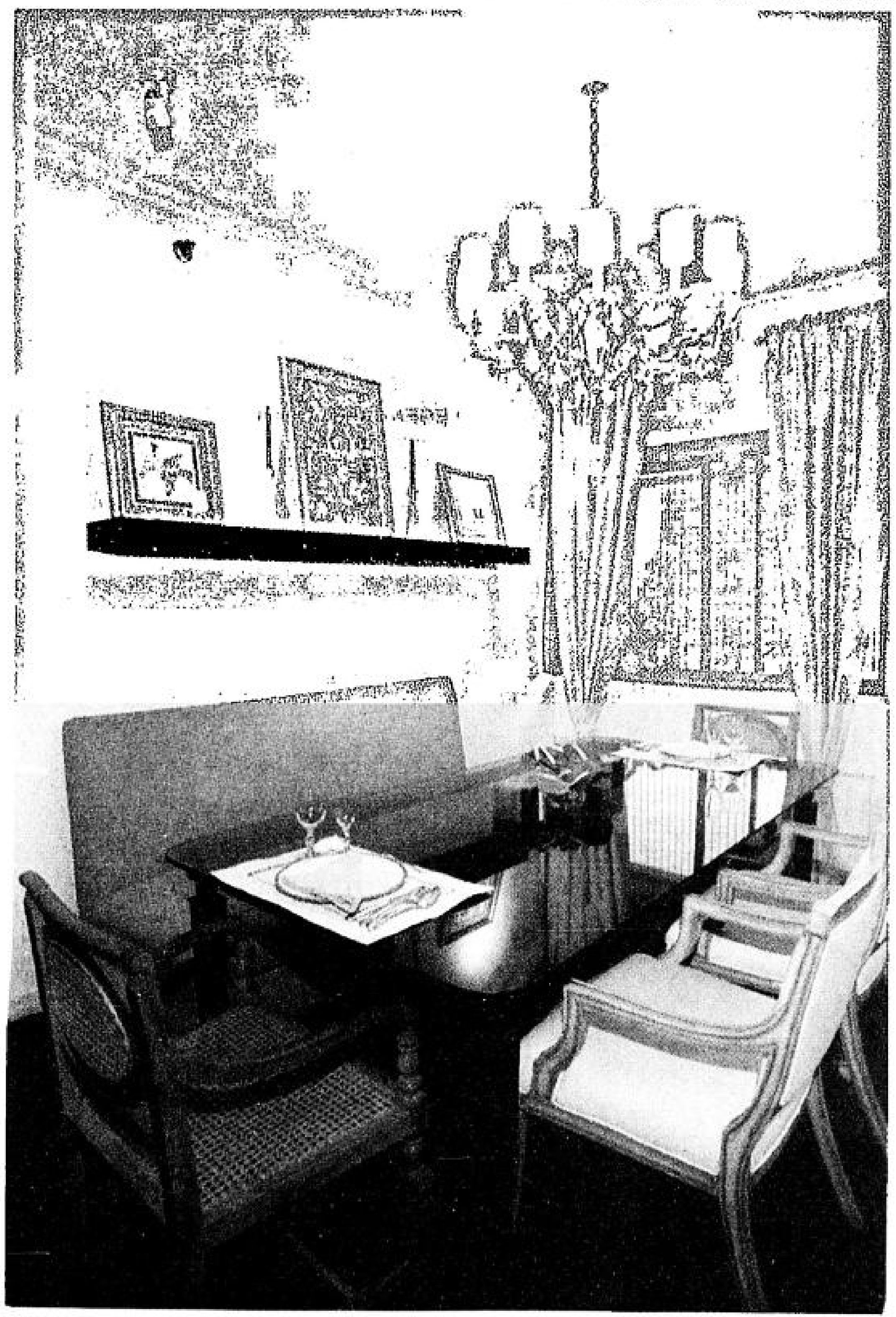
The motif and design of Tessie's condo may amaze most of her viewers who probably see her as someone with a conservative and traditional style.

But that's where the element of surprise lies, as Tessie likes to say.

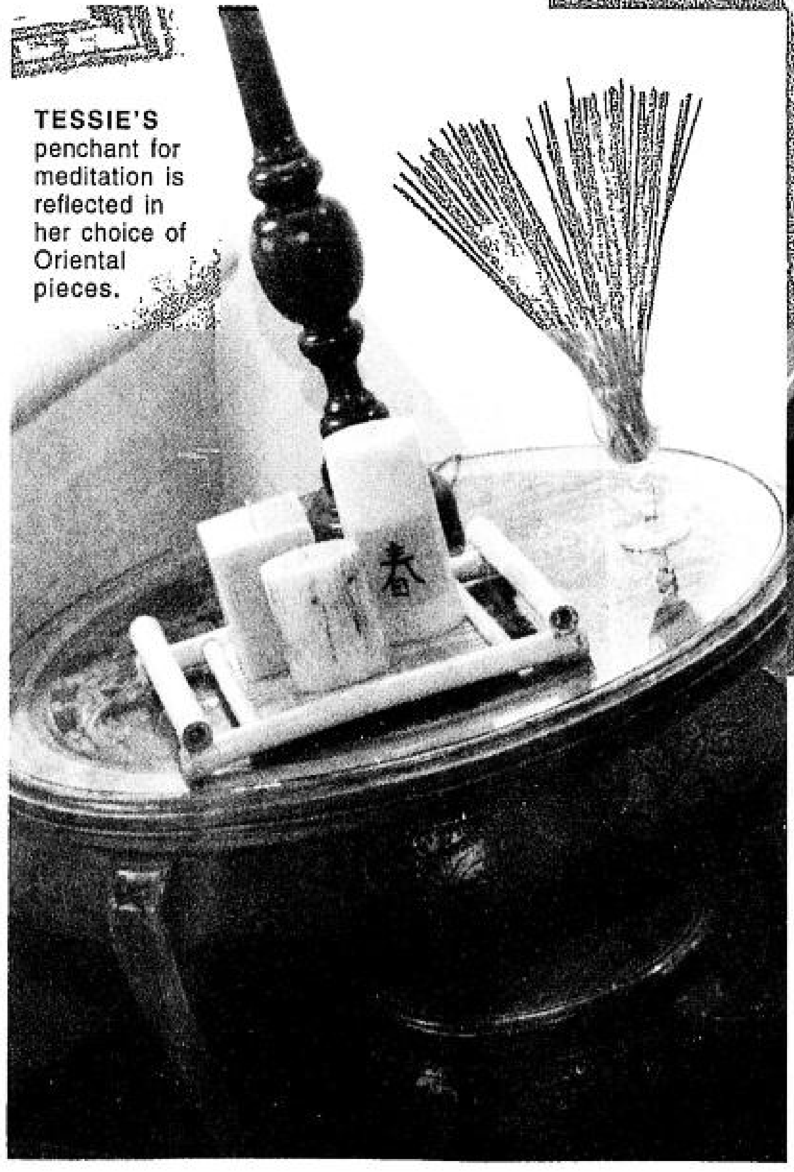


FOR CONDO living, use light color scheme, mirror, scaled furniture. The exception is the European armoire.

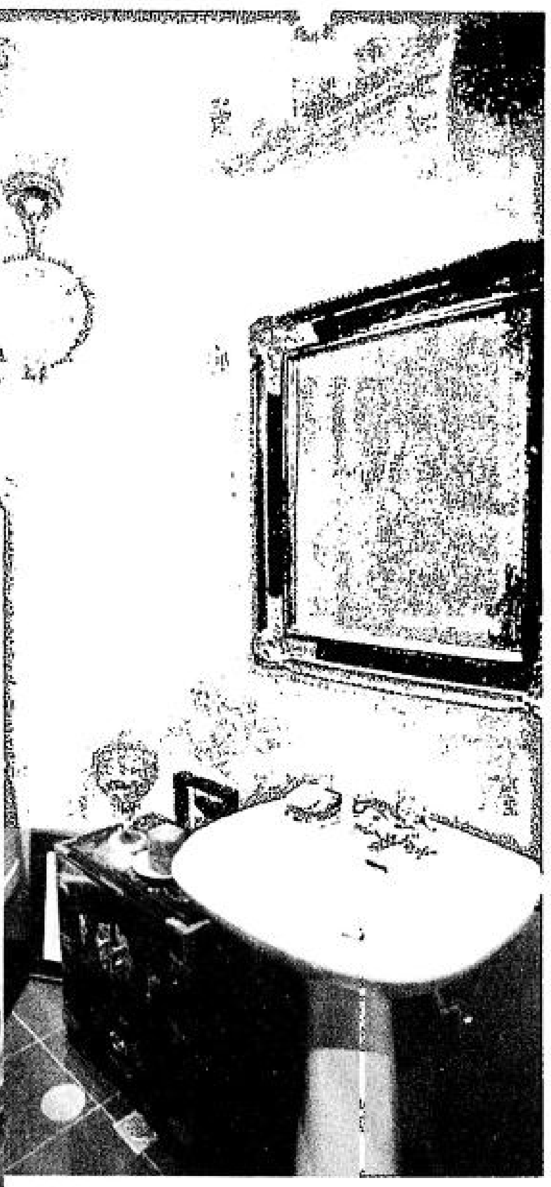
The design of the TV hostess' condo may amaze many who regard her as traditional. And that's where the element of surprise lies



THE DINING room makes a departure from the conventional setting. The design is tucked into a corner. The seats consist of a variety—a banquette, a cane-backed chair and upholstered side chairs. A ledge holds artworks.



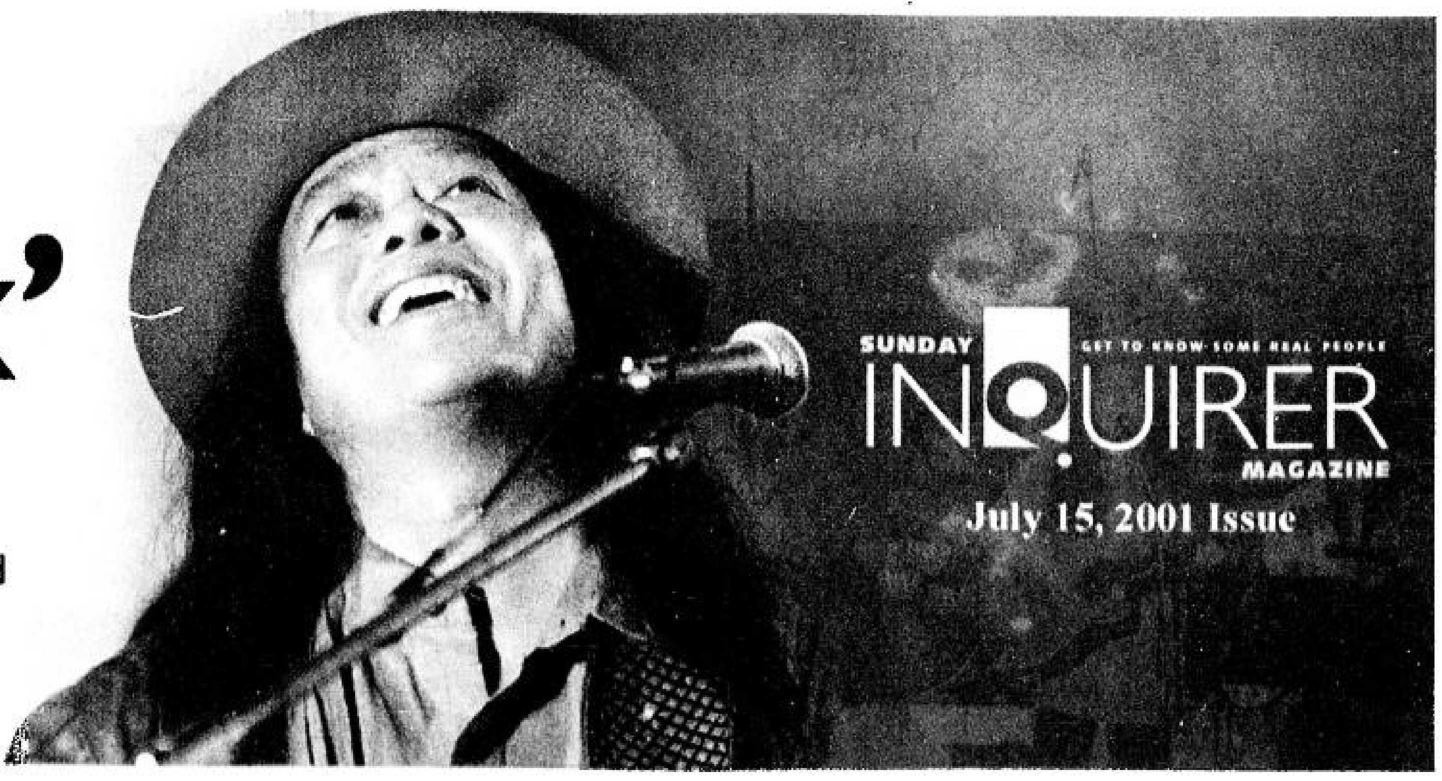
TESSIE'S penchant for meditation is reflected in her choice of Oriental pieces.



RED, the color of passion, makes a powerful statement.

Whose 'Anak' Is It Anyway?

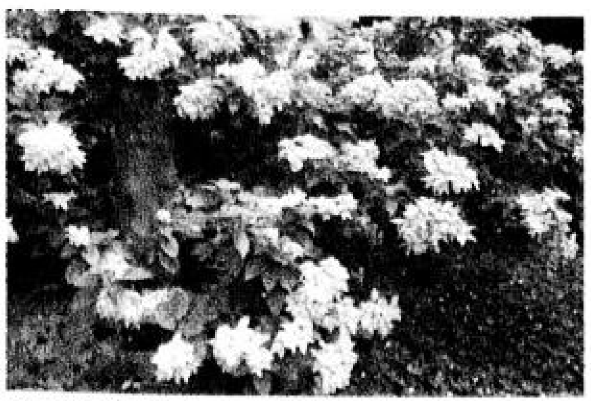
Freddie Aguilar faces a copyright battle which is bound to set a precedent for other aggrieved composers



SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE
GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE
July 15, 2001 Issue

GIANT hydrangeas

MEDINILLA magnifica


MUSSAENDA *donyas* in UP Los Baños

SEMI-TERETE vandas

Gardening ideas grow at Orchidarium

By Tita V. Giron

THE ORCHIDARIUM and Butterfly Pavilion at the Rizal Park is no longer the simple orchid park designed six years ago by the Clean and Green Foundation to serve as a repository for vanishing native plants.

Re-launched last November as a theme park, it now offers plenty of attractions including a beautiful rainforest, pocket gardens, butterfly haven, art gallery, fine dining and sports facilities. It was a dream come true for Clean and Green founders led by Former First Lady Ming Ramos. In her words, the Orchidarium has become "the garden, a fitting tribute to nature."

Obviously, people don't mind paying the entrance fee (minimum group rate is P45 for student, P60 for accompanying adult) to see the gardens, walk between waterfall and rock wall, fish a little with hook, line and sinker or scale a rocky trail.

Lush and green

Garden fanciers have various other reasons for visiting the Orchidarium. Some go there for the educational lectures and demonstrations on garden plants, similar to the series held during the recent Flower Power-Green Power Festival. Most of us, however, find it a good place to get inspiration or borrow ideas for special landscaping designs suitable to city gardening, particularly where pollution and lifestyle pose special challenges and demands. Needless to say, the park is right in the midst of one of the most polluted cities in the world, yet it is lush and green. And before it was transformed into an urban idyll, the area used to be a car park.

"There's no secret to the lush and green gardens in the Orchidarium," park forester and chief caretaker June Alvarez told us. "We recreated a natural habitat for trees and plants with a waterfall and ponds to boot. The birds and the bees, so to speak, are back. As in the forest, the plants and the insects depend on each other for survival." Alvarez is also an entomologist or a scientist who specializes in insects. Two horticulturists from UP Los Baños, Jigs Gonzales and Jaja Lava, tend to the plant requirements at the various specialized gardens in the park.

Orchids

Semi-terete vandas and fire orchids bloom profusely in one of the specialized gardens identified in the park map as "Ring of Fire" zone. Unlike most orchids that need to be grown inside shade houses, the hardy plants are planted directly under the sun.

"Grow them together," orchid growers Vic Chin and CV Lazaro advised us when they gave lectures on orchid growing during the garden festival. Semi-terete vandas and fire orchids, they explained, are grown in the same area for practical reasons. They have the same sunlight requirement and they support each other since they need to grow vertically.

"When the plants are healthy, they are not easy targets of pests. However, they need various formulations of fertilizers to become healthy and to bloom profusely." They informed us further that fertilizers are available at commercial garden centers.

Pond and Heli-pad

"If you want a fast-growing plant for the garden pond, try the Quiapo or water lettuce plant. These beautiful plants are called Quiapo because of a legend that tells the origin of Manila's Quiapo district," Alvarez pointed out as he gave us a tour of the Exotic Pond were a thick carpet of "Quiapo" or "Kiyapo" water plants covered the entire surface.

A clump of Nymphaea water lily with a solitary flower gave credence to the name Mystic Lagoon where one is supposed to feel mystical while meditating or feeding the hungry carps.

Don't look for helicopters at the zone called Heli-pad, which is actually the heliconia garden. The zone proves that heliconias thrive and bear flowers in city gardens. Planted side by side, they form a natural fence that blocks ugly spots in the garden. Their flowers are bright and colorful, hence the names of Orchidarium heliconias such as Sexy Pink, Caribea, or Crab's Claw.

Hibiscus and Donyas

There are several other gardens to view, but the most interesting ones are the Hibiscus and the Donyas gardens because they showcase different hybrids, mostly created by Filipino plant breeders.

Named after outstanding Filipinas, the hibiscus developed by Dr. Rey Pimentel of the Institute of Plant Breeding include Tandang Sora, Oryang, Marcela Agoncillo, Lolay Teodora Alonso, Nay Isa Teresa Magbanua, Ningning Trinidad Pecson, Nazaria Lagos, Gabriela Silang, Goria Montoya and Herala Agueda Kahabagan.

The 11th hibiscus hybrid was named Sentenarya to celebrate the Philippine Centennial Year.

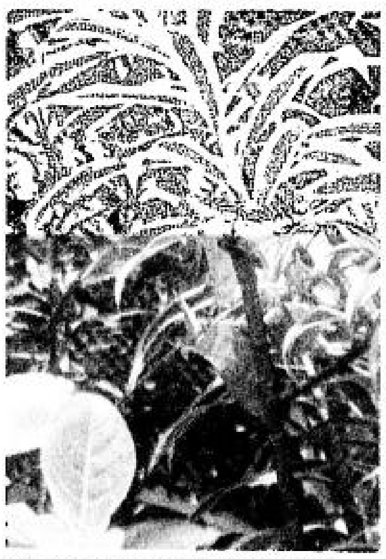
The Donyas garden at Orchidarium proves that Mussaenda plants grow lush in city conditions. They are all named after the Philippines' First Ladies, minus Loi Ejercito.

In the collection are Donyas Hilaria Aguinaldo, Aurora Quezon, Paciencia Laurel, Esperanza Osmeña, Trining Roxas, Alicia Quirino, Luz Magsaysay, Leonila Garcia, Eva Macapagal, Ginang Imelda Marcos and Ming Ramos.

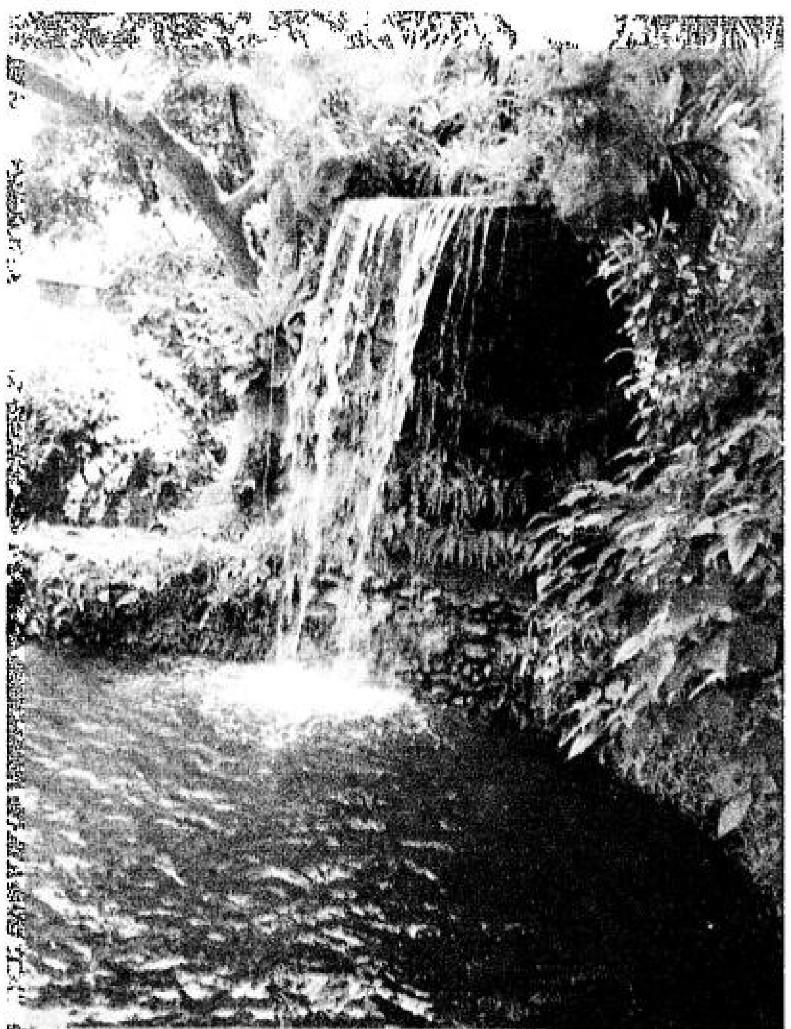
For more information, call June Alvarez at 527-6376 or 527-6378.

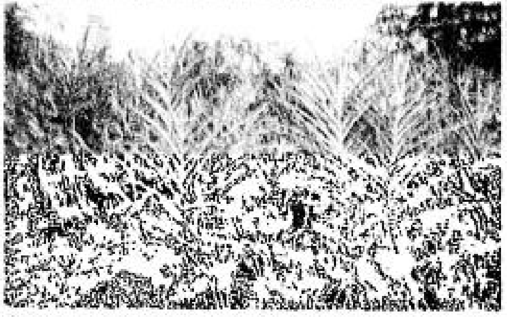
E-mail the author at mgiron@csi.com.ph

MEDINILLA magnifica


BUTTERFLY dries wings on ornamental ginger plant

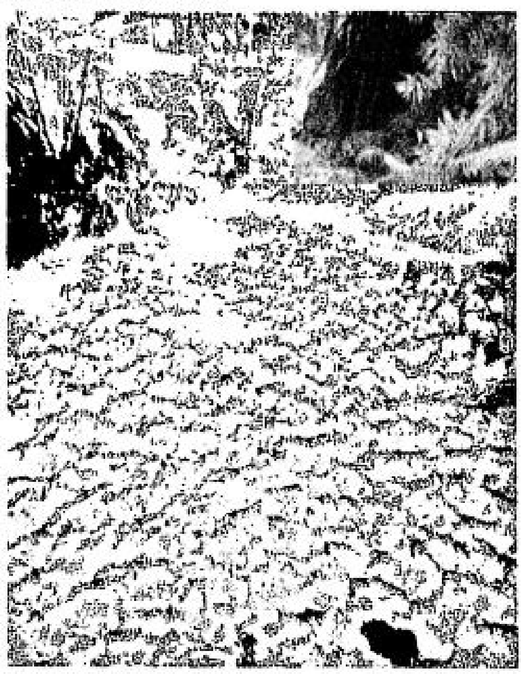
ORCHIDARIUM guest lecturers Vic Chin and CV Lazaro with park forester June Alvarez, horticulturists Jigs Gonzales and Jaja Lava

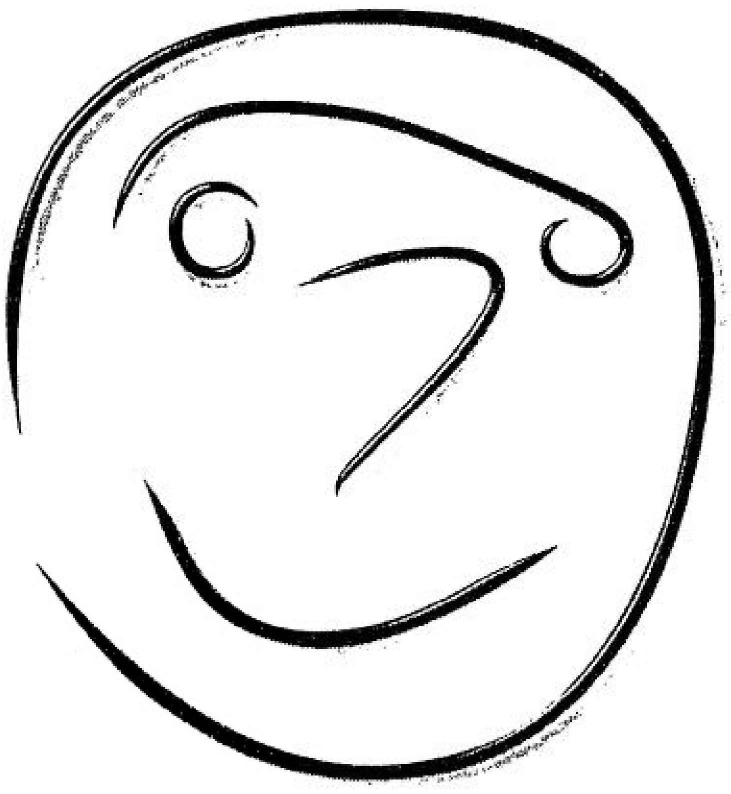

FERNS and bromeliads grow lush by the waterfall.


SEMI-TERETE vandas on driftwood

A fitting tribute to nature, the Orchidarium not only features a rainforest, gardens and butterfly pavilion but also hosts lectures and demonstrations on the environment

POTTED medinilla


LEGENDARY "Quiapo" water plant at meditative pond



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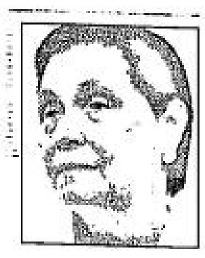

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

WINNERS of Cathay Pacific's International Wilderness Experience essay contest were supposed to leave for Rustenburg, South Africa this July. They were to spend nine days in the company of some 50 other Asian students learning about nature, its beauty and most of all, its care. In the process, they would have learned about each other.

But circumstances beyond the essay contest committee's control have compelled it to cancel this year's trip to South Africa.

Nevertheless, the essays the Filipino contestants submitted are too good to forget. They reflect their understanding of the environment. Many of the contestants are already involved in environmental projects in their schools or communities. And this interest shows not only in their essays, but also in their response to questions of contest coordinators.

Alfonso Tomas P. Araullo, 18, is a graduate of Philippine Science High School, and this year is enrolled in a course in Applied Physics scuba diving. He also participates in clean-up activities.

Pamela Joy M. Mariano, 16, a Philosophy freshman at the Ateneo de Manila University, joined the Cathay Pacific essay contest last April with the hope of visiting the South African wilderness this July which is the winners' prize. The airline conducts the essay contest annually to choose four young Filipinos to join other Asian students for an International Wilderness Experience, an opportunity to witness nature in its pristine best and learn how to conserve it.

For this reason, the contest theme has always been the environment and its many aspects. Participants are allowed to select which of those aspects they wish to write about. Not all make it. But sometimes, the messages conveyed in the essays are too important to ignore.

Pamela didn't have to go too far to choose her theme. Incidents that frequently occur in her neighborhood provided her with a built-in theme. So she writes about people from across her street who need a little prodding to make them more concerned about their surroundings.

Like an artist, she uses color as a devise to bring home her point, which is: While there are litterbugs everywhere, there are also the diligent ones who pick up after them, bringing in the "bright, yellow" optimistic note of her story. So, as we did last week, we are reprinting one more essay here.

A bright yellow raincoat

"When it rains, water swirls out of the clogged drain across the street. As a car drives through the current, the water splashes out onto the sidewalk. It swirls out of the storm drain, carrying empty packets of chips, plastic take-out glasses, a worn-out slipper. Sometimes, I try to guess what comes out of the drain. Chip packets are easy to see because their colors are bright and each brand of chips has a different color.

"The chip packets wash over to our street from the next street, parallel to ours. Behind the vending-machine warehouse, printing company and apartment building across the street live hundreds of people. It is a slum, formally called Sitio San Jose, but usually just "San Jose" or "*riles*," because the houses and shanties are built along the old, long-ago unused train tracks. The people from there throw trash into the storm drain because there is barely any space left to put their garbage.

"It is very easy to get used to seeing the water swirling out of the drain across the street, especially if you have seen it happen every time it rains hard. I have seen it often enough in the 13 years I've lived in this house. The water swirls and flows, murky gray, the color of smog. It blends with the drab, flat color of the city, so easy to overlook and ignore from the inside of the car where it is warm and comfortable.

"A car window is rolled down, and out comes a hand. It drops something bright red into the gray swirling water—an empty bag that once held tortilla chips. The hand retreats into the car, and the window is rolled up again. The car drives away.

"It is easy to distance ourselves from what is outside our window, our car, our house. Especially if we see it every day. Especially if it blends with the gray landscape of the city.

"A man from one of the apartments across the street walks out into the rain, wearing a bright-yellow raincoat. He carries a long-handled rake. I watch him as he eases the rake down into the storm drain. I watch him as he slowly raises the rake, laden with empty packets of chips, plastic take-out glasses, worn-out slippers, cardboard. The water swirls about his ankles as he wades to the green garbage bin and dumps the soaked debris into it. He repeats this several times until, instead of flowing outward, the rainwater flows into the storm drain, as it should. The man in the yellow raincoat walks back into his apartment carrying his rake.

"I watch from my bedroom window, wondering when others like me would have the courage to put on a yellow raincoat, carry a rake and brave the rain."

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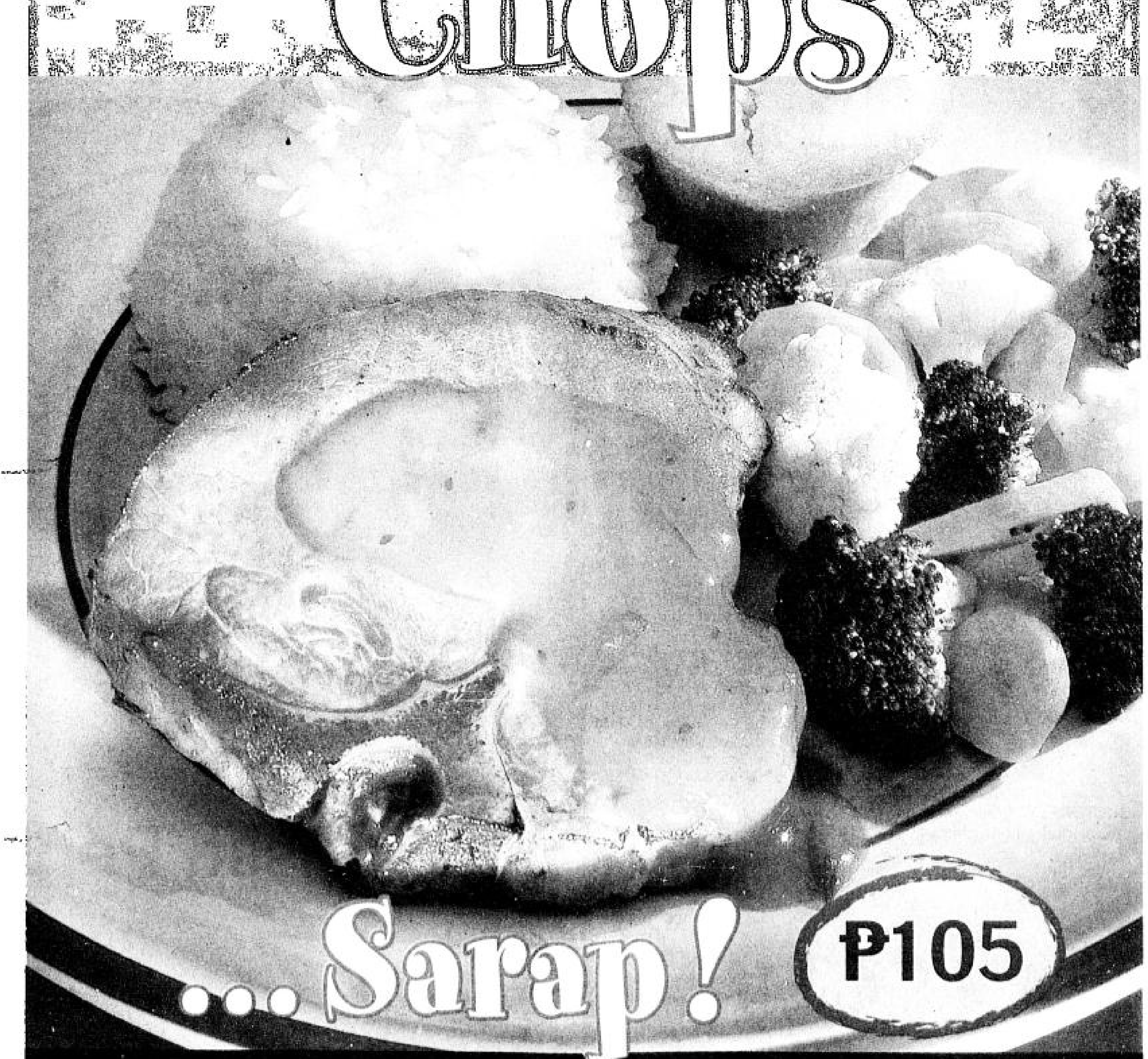

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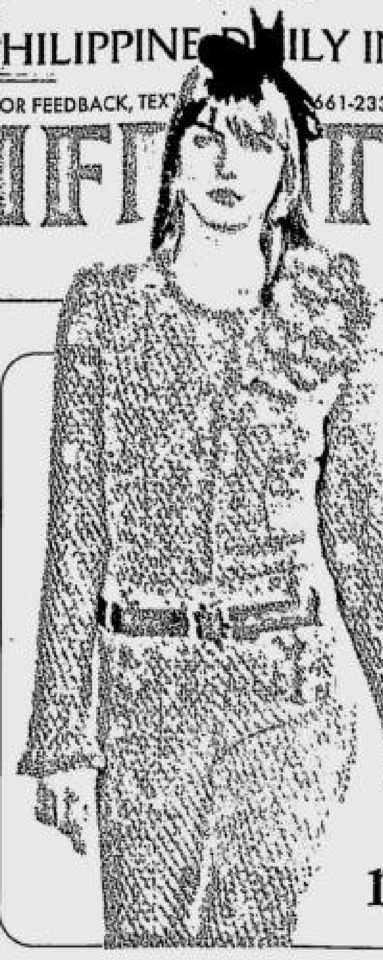
Calm down, it's not the end of the country

(Story on page D4)



(Story on page D2)

Paris goes rich and romantic

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Paris goes rich and romantic

WHILE the Philippines is down in the dumps with news of bad finances and kidnappings, the spirit in the French fashion world is as buoyant as its economy.

Emanuel Ungaro. Don't ask the price for gilded, feathered splendor. Only a handful of women can afford these suits and gowns. There were plenty of leather numbers appliquéd with flowers and a few with a tie-dyed look.

Sexy little minis came out in beautiful lace, sometimes gilded, while a boldly white-stitched flared black jacket with big patch pockets could fit into anyone's wardrobe.

Some of the hooded djellaba style coats in soft fabrics hark back to Ungaro's fascination with North Africa in the 1970s.

The evening dresses were deliciously romantic and always splendid with the big feather bouquets worn like corsages at the shoulder. Many were topped with luscious, colorful brocade wraps and coats.

Tiered slim silk evening pants were extraordinary: graded from gray at the waist down to pink—and the tiers were edged in sparkling crystals.

Scherrer. Designer Bernard Perris had a couple of hits and some misses. The dramatic long black velvet evening coat with white, feathery trim was a good operatic number.

A sober tuxedo style with one flared leg split and filled in with chiffon was a new fillip for this popular trouser suit. A lacquered red snakeskin suit fluttering scarves from the bodice or the mini outfits with long, trailing fringes, as well as the Christmas-tree balls hanging from a mini were turnoffs for women with more elegant tastes.

Givenchy. Welshman Julien MacDonald drew mixed reviews for his debut at Givenchy. He followed on the heels of English designer Alexander McQueen, whose towering, sculpted suits and eccentric costumes were remarkable for their amusing oddities. McQueen now pursues his own label under the aegis of Gucci.

MacDonald, already known in London for his eccentric knits, decided to return to silhouettes and sobriety associated with Hubert de Givenchy. Some found the dark and rigorous collection lacking in excitement, but a former client, Cora Sue Nace, found it "chic and magnificent, something elegant women would wear."

MacDonald was apparently aiming to put couture sobriety back in place here—with the slim leather skirt and its chiffon blouse with ruffled sleeves, the sheath dresses with chimney collars, caped or draped backs. Details like beading, tucks and a few frills filled in for excitement.

VERY Chanel by Karl Lagerfeld

Valentino. Still celebrating his 40 years in couture after glittering celebrity parties last fall in Rome and Los Angeles, emphasized the theme: "Look rich."

His favorite colors—red, black, white and a tad of lavender—came up throughout, as did a long, flame red wool crepe suit with sable trim and a short dress.

Ruffled blouses and ostrich feathers allied to practical details like black pencil pants and white shirts, striped pantsuits with fur touches all made appealing day wear. Then the party clothes exploded with cutouts, tiers, flounces and beading.

Jean-Paul Gaultier. Slick pinstriped suits with low hip pants under Soya-brown chiffon tops and tailored or tunic-style jackets struck an original, elegant daytime note.

There were Suzie Wong-style raised collars and silk details in the clothes with fanciful names like Triads, Fu Manchu or Chinese Torture, a beautiful bolero-topped suit with lean pigskin trousers plus touches of black taffeta.

EMANUEL Ungaro

JEAN-Louis Scherrer

Gaultier's ideas were overflowing: plumed pompoms on a willowy transparent top over hip-hugger pants; sable-fringe capelets over slim trousers; a big Soya-brown trench-style coat lined with saffron brocade. Monkey-fur and feathered skirts, or big feathers used to emphasize the shoulders.

For evening, there were some outstanding tailcoat outfits. There were also sparkly numbers, like beaded, sequined georgette trousers worn with a fitted, draped overdress in light crepe wool, and the deep blue short skirt outfit with Chinese-collared bolero and jet-beaded bra.

Donatella Versace. Her show was a lesson in attitude, and had a certain sex appeal. The theme was an oft-seen wild-animal inspiration. Versace's game park featured many minis in luxurious fabrics with ocelot, zebra, tiger prints, plus plenty of shiny beaded embroidery.

Models in huge wigs paraded in sequined boleros over silk skirts with moon-shaped cutout motifs. Silvery leaves adorned fitted mini-dresses. Long or short pastel crystal and rhinestone-embroidered dresses, with elaborate trains, were glitzy enough for anywhere.

Chanel. Karl Lagerfeld stunned his audience with an all-trousers show.

Pants ranged from very lean to slightly flared. Skirts were relegated to tunic status to go with the pants, even in the most dressy organza or sequin-embroidered evening wear.

The whole collection was desirable couture at its best, from the first bouclé piped wool trouser suits with boxy or fitted long jackets to glittery evening ensembles.

For daytime, the tweed suits came out in browns, soft beige plaids, autumn russet, grays and deep burgundies, plus grape and plum. Slim lines meant rather slim pants, and the longer jackets were belted at the waist or a bit higher.

Evening looks included plenty of pearl and bead embroidery, shiny sequins, ruffled tunics with the pants. Some flesh-colored chiffon or organza and lace tops over slim pants gave a sexy note.

Some beautiful blue silks for the pants and tunics, see-through laces and fabrics and plenty of expensive costume jewelry gave this collection personality.

Christian Lacroix. He adores ballerina styles with elaborate tutu skirts, harlequin looks with sparkly multicolored miniskirts, or lacy ladies with hints of Spain in red and black.

There was a gray fitted patchwork silk jacket with its pink and gray tiered feathered pants. And a music-hall number with a décolleté satin jacket, huge ruffled and bubbled sleeves, a fuchsia-black skirt wrap over black lace tights.

Other outfits gave a wild harlequin look by mixing up different sequined shapes and fabrics on the sleeves and pants. The show was a gorgeous display of the couturier's art and his workshop's skill.

Hanae Mori. For daytime, this Japanese designer offered well-cut glen plaid suits with pants or skirts, nicely adorned with sparkling butterfly pins—Mori's trademark. Those who want fantasy could opt for the coppery leather jacket over its dress of Chantilly lace with puffy copper and beige ruched ribbon effects on the skirt.

Those who want the traditional but exotic Hanae Mori will look at her fabulous mink-trimmed, hand-painted Japanese kimonos.

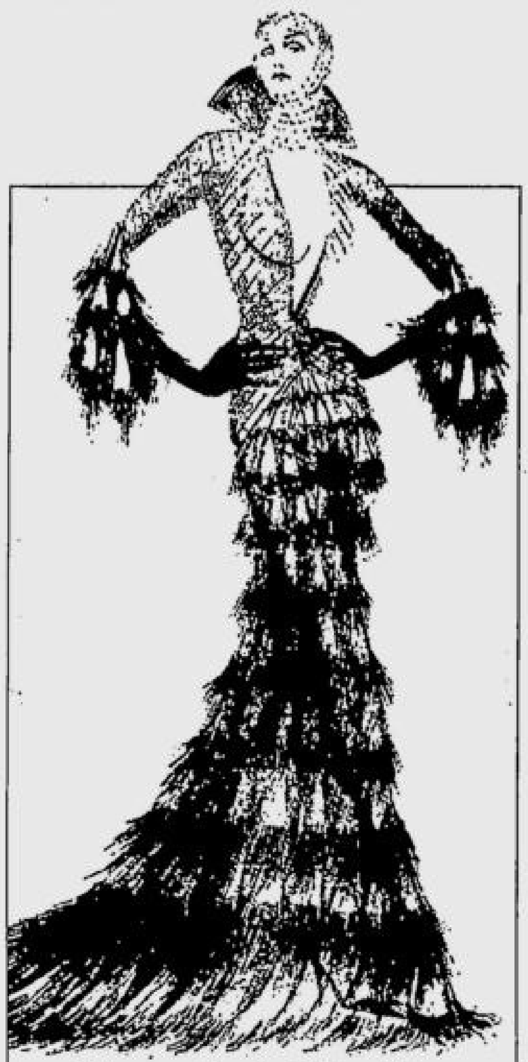
Balmain. Oscar de la Renta presented slim, slightly fitted silhouettes in dresses and coat dresses cut to the knee, had a "Jackie O." appeal.

Silky tweed trouser suits with straight, slim pants and draped-front jackets were fine for daytime. Big fox toques and collars, and an occasional sable coat added the most expensive touches.

Choices for evening, besides the wildly luxurious brocade-lined sable coats included a simple black draped jersey evening dress topped by a shocking-pink taffeta coat.

De la Renta laid on an extravagant show of pretty red and black dresses—almost straight out of Velazquez or Goya paintings, but modern enough for today.

KARL Lagerfeld



Givenchy's Big Mac takes a bite into the big league

JULIEN McDonald, labeled Big Mac by the French fashion press, illustrates one of the clothes in week's haute-couture showings in Paris. Classic and modern, the 28-year-old designer boasts about the allure and sexiness his clothes have when worn by the right woman.

Big Mac describes the Givenchy woman: "So French, your little black dress. She is formed by the silhouette, exuding only elegance. Sometimes she reserves the surprise on her shoulders. A woman ought to mysteriously surprise."

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Seduce with strong eyes and wet lips

NINA Ricci's new collection focuses on passionate eyes.

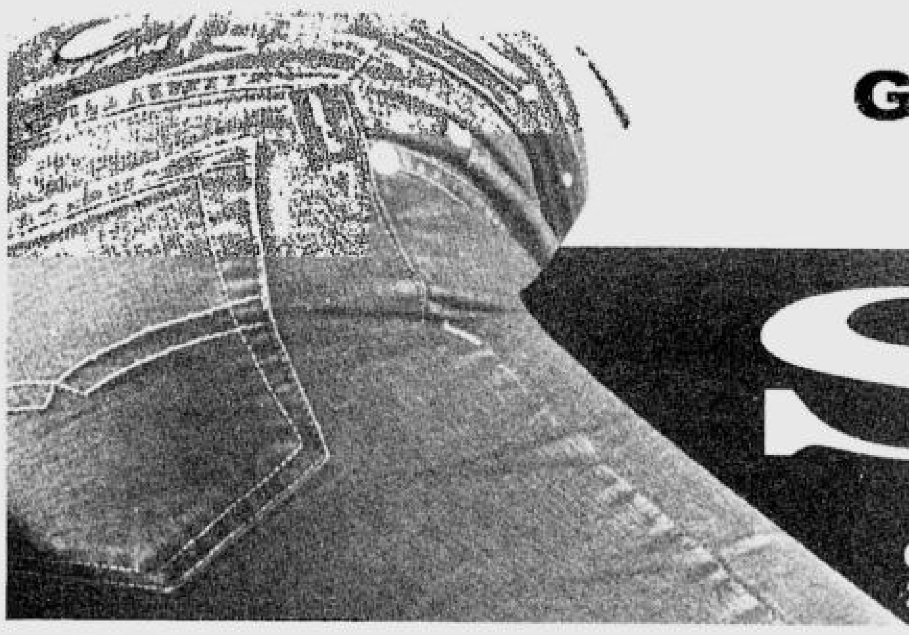
The two new shades of Mono eye shadow are Turquoise Vibration and Bleu Laser. Their high concentration of pigments gives the really intense colors and perfect hold remaining absolutely true to the palette. These Mono eye shadows ensure silky-smooth application with no caking.

Whether intense or soft, the electric blue style can fit her ever-changing moods. For intense look, the eyelid is smothered with Bleu Laser—a profound color, from electric to navy blue. Violette d'Or is a deep, heavy shade of violet with shimmering metallic reflections. For a soft look, Turquoise Vibration drifts toward green with a slight fold shimmer. Its texture makes it possible to play on slight variations ranging from pure turquoise to aquatic green. Bronze Dore is one of the classics from the Ricci palette that suits her excellently to produce an ultra-sophisticated finish.

The Nina Ricci Wet and Dry Pencils are essential team players in the electric blue collection. They contribute to the bold graphic style of the makeup.

For vibrant lips, Nina Ricci has a Protective Lip Gloss (SPF 10) in a transparent pink or orange sparkle of energy. The shades are either soft or intense.

MODEL: MICHELLE QUIZON
HAIR AND MAKEUP BY TOTO
AND JAIME RUBEN FOR PATRICK ROSAS



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Green Tea: All That Extraordinary Goodness.

Green tea is an ancient Oriental favorite. Today, scientific studies demonstrate that it offers extraordinary health benefits. Green tea has been found to have antioxidant properties. It has been found to inhibit cancer cell formation, reduce cholesterol, body fat, blood pressure and sugar levels, protect against bacteria and viruses, and even tooth decay.

The main health-promoting substance in green tea is a group of plant chemicals known as *polyphenols.* Long known as tea tannin, polyphenols constitute up to 30% of dissolved green tea. Green tea is processed in a way that preserves these natural chemicals. Compared to black tea, green tea may contain as much as 90% more polyphenols.

Anti-Cancer Agent

Polyphenols have anti-oxidant properties, which means they fight free radicals which harm the body's cells. They are also known to inhibit the formation of cancer cells. The popular habit of drinking green tea with meals in Japan is thought to be one of the reasons for lower rates of these cancer types in that country.

Cardiovascular Aid

Green tea's anti-oxidant properties also aid in preventing the formation of fat cells in the arteries, thereby reducing this major cause of heart disease.

Evidence suggests that green tea's polyphenols have an anti-clotting component. Clots in the bloodstream prevent the normal flow of oxygen to the heart and brain and can be fatal.

In one study of 2,000 men, aged 49-55, those who drank more green tea (up to 10 cups) a day were found to have lower levels of LDL or bad cholesterol than those who drank less. Green tea has been found to reduce LDL, while elevating HDL (good cholesterol) levels.

Polyphenols also inhibit the action of ACE, the enzyme that induces high blood pressure. At the same time, it can help lower blood glucose levels, as an aid to diabetes maintenance.

Anti-Bacterial, Anti-Viral

Green tea has long been a folk remedy for diarrhea. Recent studies reveal that polyphenols are powerful antibacterial agents that inhibit the growth of a range of infectious bacteria, and make some bacteria more susceptible to specific antibiotic treatments.

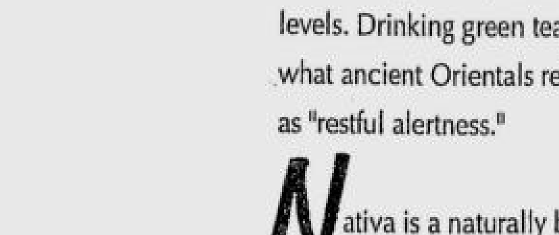
Japanese researchers have found that green tea polyphenols prevent the flu virus from attaching itself to normal cells. Evidence also suggests polyphenol action against viral infections that cause diarrhea.

Perhaps the best-documented antimicrobial effect of polyphenols is against bacteria that cause tooth decay. Substances in green tea have been found to completely inhibit the growth of oral bacteria.

Studies continue to be conducted worldwide on the health benefits of green tea. But one fact has been established. Drinking up green tea regularly is necessary to realize these benefits.

Nativa is naturally brewed green tea in a convenient package. It's also available in gingko and redbush tea varieties. Serve chilled. You'll love its fresh, naturally sweet taste enhanced with a hint of lemon.

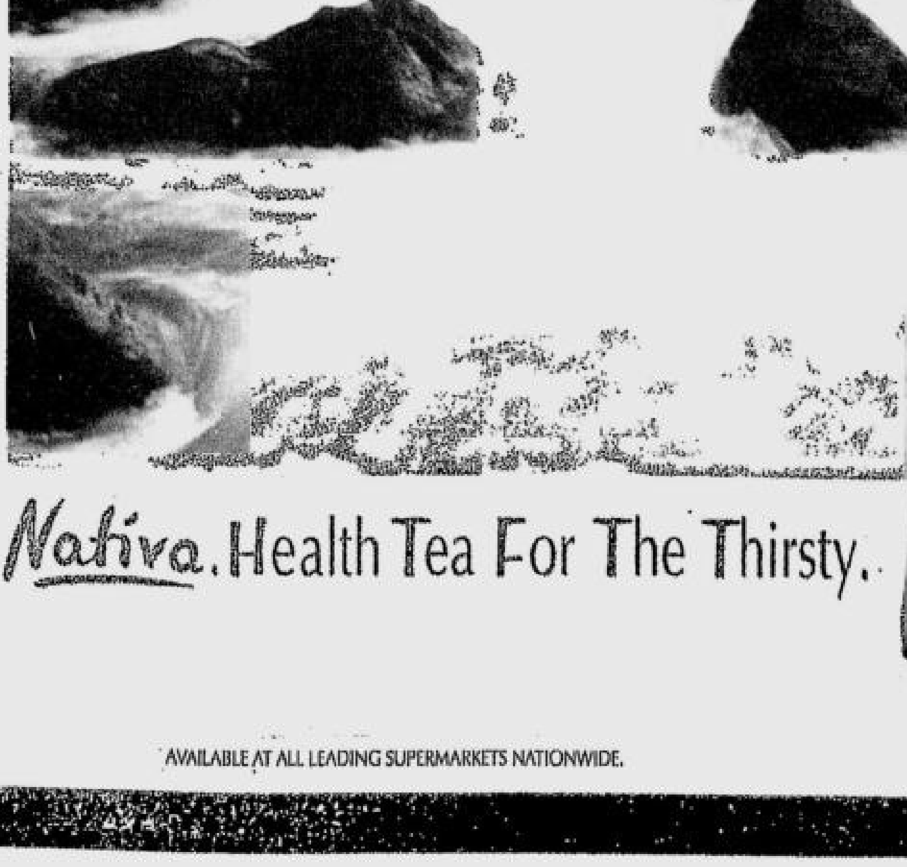
It's a pleasant, gentle-tasting drink. And it may be the single most valuable substance you can take to protect your overall health.



A Cool Change For The Healthier

Green tea has been the Orient's favorite all-day daily beverage for centuries. Today, it has proven to be a rich source of **polyphenols,** powerful antioxidants that gently cleanse the body of harmful substances, while lowering cholesterol, blood pressure and sugar levels. Drinking green tea brings about what ancient Orientals referred to as "restful alertness."

Nativa is a naturally brewed ready-to-drink green tea with a zesty dash of lemon. Just chill and enjoy this cleansing, refreshing drink.



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LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

WHEN I wrote the other week that the "future is not in here," many e-mailed in their conviction—for or against that prognosis. I don't want to ignore them.

Among them was a young woman whose boyfriend had migrated to the United State and had asked her to follow him. She doubted that she would, she wrote, because "I may not be rich or poor here but there's one thing I couldn't trade for the rest of my life. I'm happy here and I'd choose to help our countrymen solve these crises than not to have tried at all. Nothing could replace what I have here (family, friends, Youth for Christ, etc.). This is my home." That it came from a GenXer is a wake-upper.

Another came from an older reader who "did rather well financially abroad." But, he wrote, "I still have doubts, even remorse about the whole thing. I guess all immigrants experience these self-doubts no matter how attached they are to their adoptive country. It is even more intense when one starts feeling like a foreigner when visiting this homeland."

That e-mail reminded me of an admission from a successful Filipino I ran into in New Jersey last month. When he became a US citizen, he said, as he took his oath of allegiance to America and thus renounced his Filipino citizenship, he cried for it was like saying goodbye to a happy childhood, a lifetime.

On the edge

These days I wonder if such sharing from those who had gone abroad would be enough to hold back some people from leaving, or at least make them see things in perspective—beyond the blur of ugly headlines.

This feeling of standing on the edge comes even when you're not reading or watching the news. Even when you're safe and seated in the office, the doomsayers walk in with their latest thumbs-down.

"My girlfriend was driving in Sucat last night at 11:30," **Boots**, our marketing director, barged in on our meeting, "and there was this car full of men pointing at her tires. She knew it was a ruse, but she slowed down to glance back at her tires, without getting out of the car. But she knew better—as this car pulled up beside her and was clearly about to cut her, she held her phone to her ear as if she was talking to someone, and with her other hand, held up her gun. A toy gun, but that wasn't obvious in the dark. Seeing this, the car sped away." Smart girl—a Filipina already wise to the ways of her crime-infested streets.

Then it was **Harriet**'s turn to give her story. Just last Sunday morning, she said, as their car was at the stop light on C.M. Recto, they saw this old woman waiting to cross the street but a group of thugs pulled at her ear to snatch her earring. They got it and left her ear bleeding. Harriet and her companions stopped and brought the old woman to the hospital.

Okay, I get the drift. Criminals (uniformed) are on the loose—no, on a rampage—in our streets and you don't have to be a rich Tsinoy to be a victim. So to some, this is a signal to queue up at the Australian or Canadian embassy.

Roman jinx

But if criminality were enough to make you bail out of this country, then haven't you heard that we don't have a monopoly of it, its randomness and brazenness? Just this week I learned that our friend, high-society photographer **Alex van Hagen**, was at the Rome airport checking in with our good friends **Maurice Arcache**, **Bob Zozobrado** and **Cheche Lazaro**. Their hand-carry pieces were in a cart. Alex looked away and in a split second, his bag containing his expensive cameras, wallet and credit cards was gone.

They went to the Rome airport police who took down the case as routinely as if they were listening to the weather report; the police said they got at least 20 such cases a day. Just that morning, they said, a woman's handbag was slashed at the bottom right at the checkout desk, right before her eyes and those of the airline staff. So no big deal.

So if you can jet-set to Europe amid its crimes, why can you not pretend you're going on a "jungle safari" (my friend's term, not mine) every time you step out and onto our streets?

But seriously, it's not the actual crime incidence that disheartens many, it's the contagion of fear and uncertainty. **Larry Cruz**, the restaurateur and incurable bon'vivant, put it so well as he echoed the mind of hoteliers and restaurateurs (first to be hit by bad tourism, domestic and foreign): "It's not so much that business is down—business has been down before—as the fact that people are being engulfed by this sense of fear." It's this lack of confidence in our future that you can feel in the air. It's as if you pressed the loser's mode button, then put it on an auto pilot.

Doom talk

"I was telling my wife," **Jim Paredes** told me, "that for the past 20 years we've wrestled with the same political problems. *Nakakapagod na.* Do we want our kids to go through the same political problems? This has run for generations."

(By the way, the "Conversations with God" celebrated author **Neale Donald** Walsch, who was here recently, gave a beautiful endorsement for Jim's book "Between Blinks" after he read it. His blurb, to be used as marker for Jim's book, reads: "Here are the world's great truths, in the language of the soul. Uplifting wisdom such as this is a treasure. Here is where God resides—Between Blinks. The words here are a gift for the heart." Jim will come out with a 3-CD set of the talk Walsch gave at Meralco and PICC.)

From what I hear, young couples who are migrating say they're doing it for their kids. When you see the *trapos* or military men lying through teeth—again—before the news camera, or you drive down C-5 that's still covered with plastic trash, you think these couples are making the right choice.

But honestly, I haven't really looked—or pondered—that far ahead where my own kids are concerned. I believe that children, as they grow up, make their own fate, wherever they are. I won't even attempt to think or say that they'll be safer in Melbourne or Vancouver than they are here. The future is not a sole matter of immigration demographics—or of social security systems.

Your kids can get hurt, starve or get rich here as they can in Queens. You can talk safety or you can talk fate. I remember our magazine editor Carlo's story about his cousin's son, a 15-year-old, who was at the wrong time at the wrong place in school. He was in the restroom as a student barged into it and fired away—he and another boy were killed. That was the infamous shooting in school—another one—in California this year. This boy was a Fil-Am.

> If criminality makes you want to bail out of this country, then haven't you heard that we don't have a monopoly of it, its randomness and brazenness?

Trivia

As a foil to the doom talk, I like to turn trivial and list down the comic/noble reasons my friends and I are staying put here. Making this list has become our pastime (when we want to look away from the bottom line):

... *Chicharon*—at the JFK Airport New York, a customs man with a potbelly greeted me with a grin: "You have *chicharon* with you?" I wanted to ask him, Lapid's or Baliwag's? They must now be on red alert also for *chicharon*, not only *bagoong*;

... **Miriam** vowed she's leaving the country, so we guess it's all right to stay now;

... We can't be a nurse; not the sight of another asshole, please;

... We can't live without maids or drivers; piracy laws are strict in the US;

... We didn't make it to Newsweek's list of The World's Worst Countries;

... We can't cop out now and let the bad guys win;

... Modesty aside, we're all needed here.

Nobody said rebuilding and people-powering would be easy. Democracy is no fairy tale, and it's not for fairies. So let's get a hold of ourselves, it's not the end of the world or the Philippines. But we should balance this optimism and forbearance with tough political will.

NIEVERA with Mom Conchita

More on the hospice

FOR PEOPLE who inquired about St. Michael's Hospice Foundation, here is more info—it is headed by Dr. **Cynthia San Luis** as president and **Sonia Roco** as chair. Since 1996, Dr. San Luis and her group have seen over a hundred patients and helped them in their homes.

Through the years they have learned more and more about hospice service and for five years now, the home-based program has been in place. It was this year that **Marisa Lopez Grassi** got involved in it. (To answer the readers' e-mail, I'm forwarding them to the right parties.)

Martin and Mom

THE OTHER weekend, I saw another parent-child bonding, of sort. **Lydia Castillo** and I went with **Conchita Razon** to **Martin Nievera**'s concert at Greenbelt's Onstage Theater. Martin is Conchita's son (take note of the billing, for the mother is as interesting as the son, if not more). I had never seen Onstage as packed as this, additional chairs had to be put on the aisle. For good reason.

Martin gets better with age—and with pain, it seems. In his 30s, not only has he carried over his original teenybopper fans to this stage of his career and to his repertoire, he's also dragged along the GenXers and GenYers, and the Third Age (the *lolos* and *lolas*). His concert was a bursting package of hyper-energy, wit, incredible improvisation and good cross-sectional music.

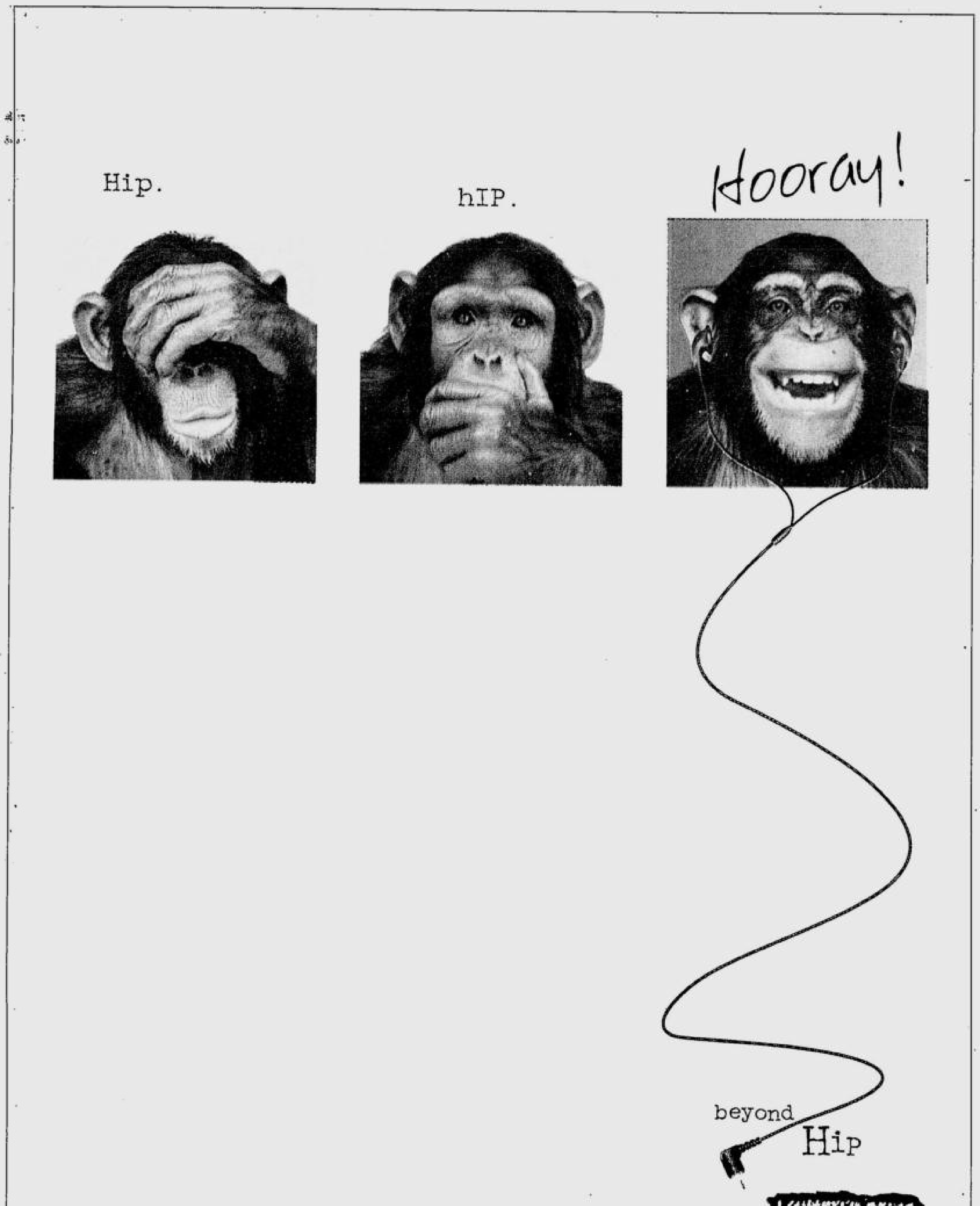
I perked up to his versions of my sons' sounds, I loved his take on my '70s and '80s hits (**Stevie Wonder**, especially) and I appreciated his salute to Broadway's "Phantom of the Opera," etc. (for his mom and his mom's friends, he said, rubbing it in).

He didn't only work up the audience, he also pushed his wit and ad libs on them in a way that would scare a less confident performer. And, thank God, Conchita knocked on wood, he hasn't been told off yet. He also hilariously mimicked **Johnny Mathis**, his dad **Bert Nievera** and **Gary Valenciano** (with wife **Angeli** thrown in).

"It's when he performs that he is really himself. He forgets his problems," Conchita muttered to us. The mother spoke too soon. Halfway into the show, as he did a song on a broken heart, Martin was on the verge of tears. Conchita, in the dark, wiped away hers. That day was Martin's and Pops' 15th wedding anniversary—aborted, of course.

Not known to many, Martin shares his home with his mother, and no one else. This son dotes on his Mom, through thick and thin. From now on, when I watch Martin, I'll see the good son in the good performer. You can still catch Martin next weekend and twice more in August. (It's Apo's turn Onstage on July 18.) We all can use that break.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@skyinet.net



The mad rush out

BY JOSE JAVIER REYES

THE LAST time this happened was when Ninoy Aquino was assassinated. Before that, it was when martial law was declared. The same kind of tension lingered in the air. No amount of consolation or even optimism could soothe frayed nerves and ease the feeling of hopelessness. When Ferdinand Marcos showed his muscle, the people cringed. When Aquino's blood was spilled on the tarmac, the citizenry felt betrayed. We've been there and done that... and here we go again.

Every day the peso sinks to a new low. No, this is not what People Power 2 promised. Everything was supposed to turn out fine. Although wiser people did not think that removing the Actor from the Palace would send things roaring and rolling, many believed, or liked to believe, that there was going to be change. A change for the better, a chance to restore the dignity of a country so battered by the twists and turns of politics that an entire nation seemed to be free falling.

There was talk about New Politics, of idealistic young lawmakers wanting to strip away all vestiges of the national cancer. There were grand statements, even more grandiose promises that we can pick ourselves up and join our Asian neighbors on the road to economic and political recovery. It was not easy being a citizen of a country considered the embarrassment of Asia, an example of how democracy can go so wrong when handled so immaturely.

The price of heroism

Democracy has gone so wrong that we hail our OCWs (overseas contract workers) as the "Bagong Bayani," as if heroism can be measured by the amounts of American dollars sent back to the country even if they result in dysfunctional families. This heroism has led to an entire generation of Filipinos who grew up without their mothers and/or fathers, professionals who line up in employment agencies and embassies hoping to find a better future anywhere but in their Motherland. Mothers and daughters have become domestic helpers at the beck and call of foreigners while fathers and sons have become laborers, seamen and whatever because their country cannot assure them of a future.

We are dismayed by the tumultuous events in the South, the rise in carnappings, kidnappings, robberies and other crimes. Despair is all around us. In Quezon City, you cannot even feel safe parking your car because of numerous accounts of vehicles stolen in broad daylight.

So is it surprising that almost every other fresh graduate wants to get out of the Philippines? Does it still shock you many people insist you and your family should always have valid passports in case you have to make a quick getaway? Do you wonder why astute business people advise you to convert your pesos into US dollars and deposit them abroad because the Philippine peso has the strength of Monopoly money?

Unspeakable depths

The pain experienced by the citizenry is excruciating. It is not only because the peso is practically only half what it was worth just four years ago. The anguish comes from being a Filipino—what we have become and how we could have allowed our nation to fall into such unspeakable depths.

Choosing to stay and suffer, and wait for things to get better, appears to be a masochistic exercise. Even the apathetic can no longer act deaf and blind to the problems and the seeming hopelessness that has replaced the euphoria of the last week of January. The best solution seems to escape, to gather one's belongings and try to reinvent one's self in another country where the air is cleaner, the opportunities greater and the future brighter.

For those of us who braved the 20 years of martial law and refused to give up our citizenship, the events taking place are more traumatic. For those with families, the children will always be the primary reason for wanting to move to countries where prospects seem better. And for those in midlife, who never considered moving but are now busy preparing for their departure, the reason and agenda are clearer. They have given up hope and they do not intend to spend the rest of their lives in a nation that never learned its lessons.

One is shocked to learn the identities of those who have left or are planning to leave. Even those who have been revered as shining examples of Filipino dynamism have painfully made plans or already transplanted themselves. They have given enough, even so much, to their country but they are now moving on because they see no more reason to stay.

Easier said than done

They may be branded as traitors, cowards and opportunists. Many will equate nationalism with a do-or-die attitude, placing their personal interests aside and surrendering everything for the service of the country. But this has become easier said than done. All the slogans, all the noble gestures and statements have suddenly become too familiar—like the tired promises of politicians during the campaign period.

We cannot expect miracles. We have reached our quota of divine intervention and we should not expect our country to be resurrected with the same dramatic impact as the parting of the Red Sea. We are fools to think the months of Macapagal-Arroyo in office can create a complete turnaround considering what she has inherited and what she is facing. We are even bigger fools to believe the people in government will be suddenly blessed with tongues of fire and become zealots of righteousness and accountability.

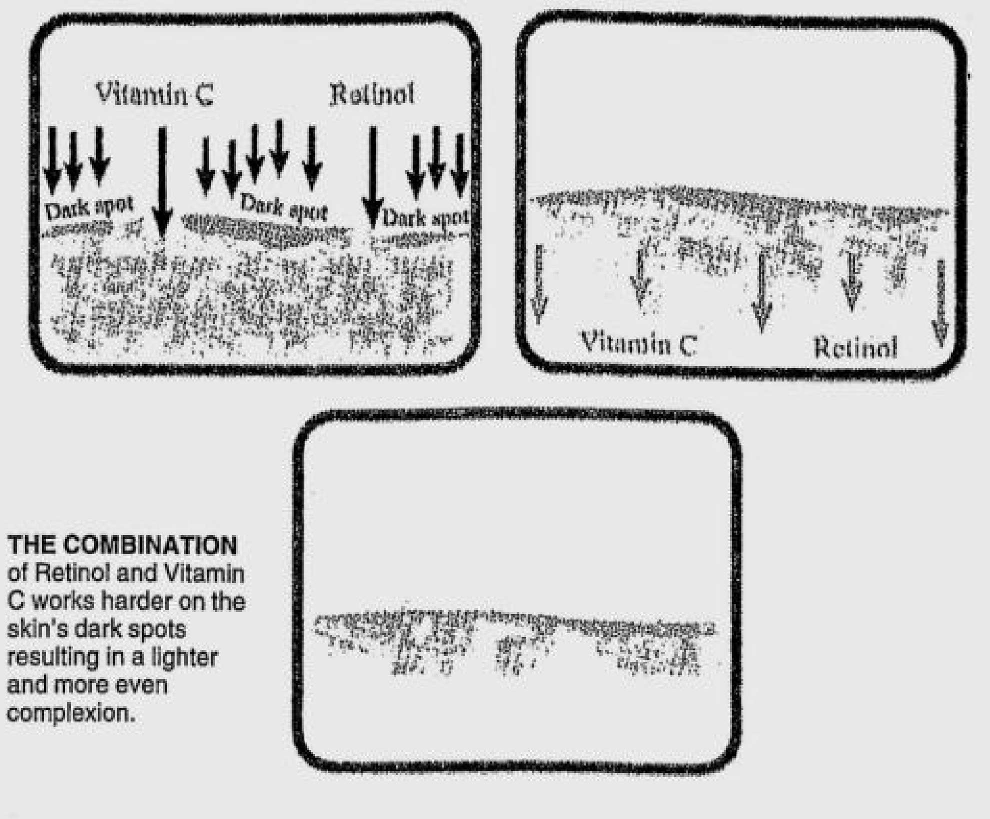
What we are experiencing now is the result of all the negligence, hypocrisy and apathy of the people vis-à-vis their nation. We are seeing the fruit of historical and political events.

By now it is quite clear: We don't need yet another drastic change of leadership. We require a change of the people.

We talk about being Filipino, yet we are exporting our people to create little Philippines all over the world. We talk about national pride, yet so few will take pains to avert an apparent national humiliation.

X marks the (fading) spot

New skin-whitening range combines Retinol and Vitamin C



THE COMBINATION of Retinol and Vitamin C works harder on the skin's dark spots resulting in a lighter and more even complexion.

IS the market ready for another skin-whitening range?

Neutrogena says there's enough room for its new Fairness Regime—the Fine Fair Essence and the Fairness UV Block.

The Fine Essence contains the patented Vitamin C with stabilized Retinol, the Fairness UV Block and the powder compact with SPF 15.

"Retinol and Vitamin C are a good combination. While other brands lighten the spots and the surrounding skin, the spots remain or become even more prominent. Our product lightens the spot more than the surrounding skin. The spots fade eventually," claims Zinnia Rivera, Johnson & Johnson's worldwide director for R&D.

Retinol is derived from Vitamin A, which lightens and moisturizes the skin, while Vitamin C has an extended effect on the skin and incites the production of collagen. Vitamin C works as a natural sunblock, according to dermatologist Marie Socouer Oblepias.

"We also use ascorbyl glucoside. Once it penetrates into the skin, it is converted into a pure form of ascorbic acid. Aside from being stable, it has the benefits of Vitamin C," says Rivera.

The difference

The action of Vitamin C and Retinol control the growth of melanin, the skin's darkening agent. "That's the action of both ingredients—which is why we think the product works well," says Rivera

The two ingredients inhibit the transfer of melanin from melanocyte where it is produced in the upper layers of the skin. Retinol accelerates the cell turnover so that the darkened cells are regenerated. "You get a replacement of the new cells at a faster rate," says Rivera.

Vitamin C enhances the penetration of Retinol twice yet it also reduces irritation produced by this substance—by threefold.

Although other brands may have similar claims or promises of lighter skin, many of these whitening products reportedly do not give good results. These products claim they have a sunscreen agent and some Vitamins but at the end of the day, they don't have clinical proof.

"We have solid basis that our product works. The difference is in the clinical testing, which is not always there in other companies," she says.

Johnson & Johnson benchmarked Neutrogena's Fairness Regime against a major brand that pioneered in the whitening range. Test results claimed that the competition's formula was a placebo.

Tests were done in China with a sample size of 30, the minimum base requirement for significant results. "We believe Chinese skin show pigmentation much faster," says Rivera.

The respondents reported results after four weeks. The product's efficacy is experienced after three months of regular use. The Fine Fairness whitening cream is applied every night.

Complementing the program

The Fairness UV Block complements the whitening program.

"Neutrogena has titanium dioxide, which blocks both UVA and UVB rays. In terms of coverage, it's good," says Rivera.

UVA and UVB are ultraviolet rays. UVA have long and short rays. They go deeper into the skin up to the dermis where you can get photoaging and cancer. UVB penetrates the top layer. It will stimulate pigmentation and viruses like herpes simplex. It can aggravate acne.

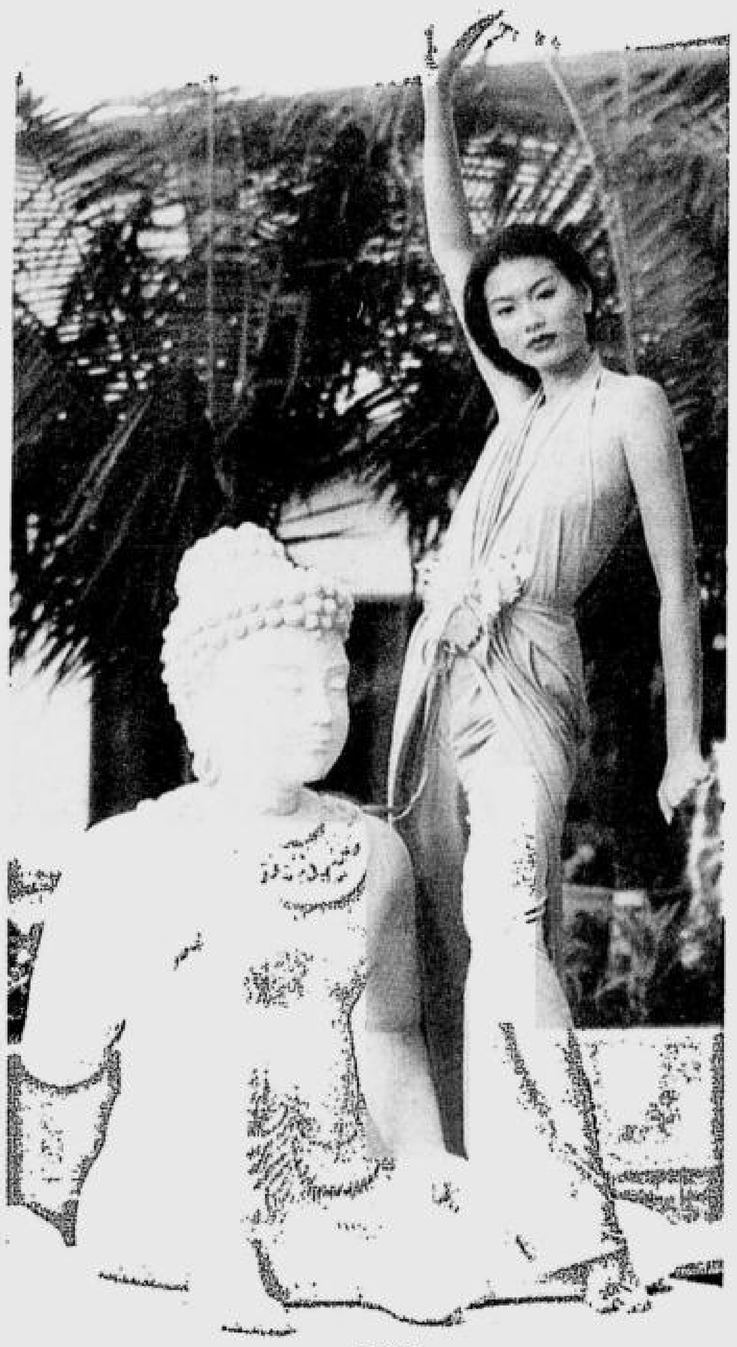
The UVA rays make you age faster. So, when you get a sunblock, look at the ingredients, aside from the SPF. Even if you have sunblock with an SPF 60 but no ingredient that blocks UVA, you will get dark," says Oblepias.

Rivera recommends a sunblock with SPF 30. However, the consumer gets this false sense of security with a product containing SPF 60.

"I tell them to get a titanium dioxide. It's dry to apply but just add moisturizer. The right time to apply is 30 minutes before going out. Let it blend with your skin. A chemical sunblock absorbs UVB to protect your skin. A physical sunblock bounces off the light," says Rivera.

Oblepias recommends women to apply the sunblock at 8 a.m. and reapply at 4 p.m. If the block is too much, retouch with the compact powder containing SPF 15. "Powders with SPF 8 or 6 don't work."

Marge C. Enriquez



HALTERED STATE. Inspired by the allure of Halston's haltered wraps, Baddeo recreates the look in a powder blue stretch jersey haltered top that flows into a wrap skirt punctuated with a floral brooch on the waist and paired with loose, comfy pants in the same fabric.

Wrap session

MODEL: AIMEE MARTINEZ SALCEDO
HAIR AND MAKEUP: HEIDI BALICHA OF BAMBBI FUENTES SALON
VENUE: DUSIT HOTEL NIKKO POOLSIDE
BADDEO'S COLLECTION AVAILABLE AT HIS ATELIER (63 WEST AVE., QC)

IT'S a wrap. That's the trend right now, be it kimono-inspired or a seamless outfit that's knotted and tied.

Eddie Baddeo moves from ethnic-inspired to high glamour couture. For this season, he creates torso-wrapped evening looks, inspired by Halston's gowns in the '70s and '80s. Seamless tubes of stretch jersey are tied and draped around the body to emphasize the female form.

BIDING TIME

PULL that most elegant wear out of your closet and have it paired with the new Mother of Pearl Dial of Timex. It is available in two-tone (gold and silver) and silver bands with self-adjustable links that allow you to custom-fit you own watches. You can also have the choice of black leather straps.

Bye, bye gray hair

FLAB, wrinkles and gray hair are the bane of those in their advancing years.

For generations, men and women in pursuit of ways to recover their natural hair color searched in vain. Many resorted to dyeing their tresses, which gave them with a headful of black strands that looked more like newly bought wigs than real hair.

Today, restoring graying hair to its natural color has become an effortless task, thanks to Wella's Viva Color Restore Mousse.

Viva Color Restore Mousse is a breakthrough formulation that has proven to be safe and effective in restoring natural hair color permanently in just two to three days. By working gradually, hair doesn't undergo an abrupt change in color but transforms slowly into its natural shade, whether it's black or brown. What's smarter is that it allows the user to remain in control of the shade and can stop as soon as s/he is satisfied with the color result.

Viva Color Restore Mousse is a gentle treat to the hair. It doesn't rely on the chemical workings of ammonia or peroxide, but works with oxygen in the air to bring back the hair's natural color. Special conditioning agents enhance the hair's condition, thus hair treated with Viva Color Restore Mousse glows with added shine and vitality.

Moreover, using Viva Color Restore Mousse is an effortless procedure. Each pack comes with an aerosol can of the mousse, a brush for easy application, two pairs of gloves, two sachets of shampoo and an instruction leaflet. To use, simply apply the mousse to the brush. Using the brush, spread the mousse evenly throughout dry or towel-dried hair. Then, allow the application to set for five minutes. Finally, rinse out the product from the hair, then shampoo, then style as usual. One can stop after a single application or continue using the mousse once every three days until the desired color is achieved.

Dare to be light

VERSUS Occhiali redefines synthesis in its latest collection of sunglasses.

As part of the Gianni Versace fashion house, the Versus line is likewise an offspring conceived out of the search for detail inspired by art, history of costume and architecture.

Essential designs, light materials, strong and determined wraparound lines prevail. Everything is intended to be as practical, comfortable and wearable as possible.

Lightness is the strong point of the collection with frames so light or almost disappearing, leaving room for clear and simple expression. Moreover, some eye pieces sport the curve effects on the frames that bring out the details of the design.

Shaded or full tint hues and two-tone shades are in control. The lenses of this year's collection are also very vividly colored to suit the crave for hues.

Shades of attitude

WITH THE EMPHASIS on color, fun, fashion, quality and its trademark—the monkey mascot—Kipling Eyewear indeed creates the shades of attitude among the youth.

Now expanding to major capitals worldwide, Kipling is no longer just a brand of bags. It has become a diverse label of shoes, stationery, watches and optical products with the stroke of genius and the monkey mascot. Kipling's revolutionary idea yields to more than 10 years of remarkable success since 1987.

The radically innovative idea of the Belgian brand paved the way to the Kipling Eyewear Collection to give a new meaning of fashion and fun to the youth. Kipling Eyewear is licensed through L'Amy, a leading France-based eye care and framing company.

Fun, because of the small, edgy frames in dynamic color combinations that give the eyewear its distinctive appeal. The frames are thin and light on the face in trendy oval and rectangular shapes.

Jollibee Journal

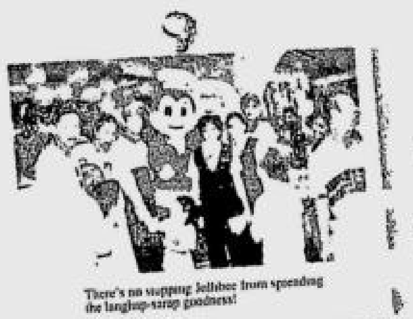
Jollibee's Book Drive Shares Joy

TANDANG SORA
25 45

(L to R) A representative from Pasong Tamo Elementary School with Jollibee store manager, Bobby Velasco, Jollibee and Vince Hizon.

June 28, 2001 was a red-letter day for Jollibee Tandang Sora, as it turned-over eleven boxes of books to Pasong Tamo Elementary School. This program was initiated by the "Donate-a-Book" Drive of Jollibee Tandang Sora and the Vince Hizon Foundation (Partners in Education). In turn, the store's regular patrons were quick to respond to the program's objective.

This project aims to help out public schools in uplifting its quality of education and to create awareness of Jollibee's concern for the larger community.



There's no stopping Jollibee from spreading the langhap-sarap goodness!

Dipolog's langhap Sarap Year

Jollibee Dipolog celebrated its first year of operations with a bang last May 30. The store was trimmed with colorful decors, as Jollibee and Hetty welcomed customers. A raffle promo was held and Jolly surprises were given to patrons on this joyous event.

With this remarkable event, one could truly say that langhap-sarap goodness can go a long way. And with Jollibee Dipolog, this is just the beginning of better things to come.

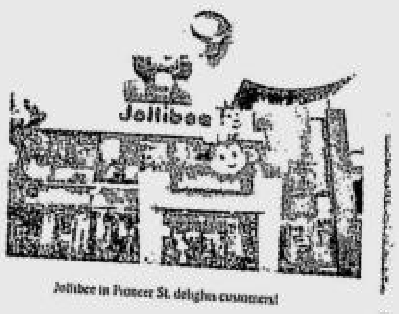
"Kaya Mong Magbigay saya, Kid!" Launched

(L to R) Mr Raffy Ocampo (PET Plans, Inc.), Ms Gina Navarrete (Jollibee Foods Corp.), Mr Jason Moss (Ilustrador ng Kabataan), Mr Jerome Dundan (PET Plans, Inc.) Ms Jane Eharle (Faber-Castell) and Jollibee.

Jollibee's "Kaya Mo, Kid!" campaign commences with yet another challenging and meaningful activity on its fifth year, the "Sabi ng Jollibee, Kaya Mong Magbigay-Saya, Kid!" mixed media art contest. This was launched to the media last July 4, 2001 at the Karapatan Hall of the Museo Pambata. In line with this, a mixed media workshop conducted by Jason Moss of INK (Ilustrador ng Kabataan) was given later that day.

This contest is open to children from Grades 3 to 7 who should create a mixed media artwork with the theme, "Sa kabutihang munti, ako'y makapagdudulot ng ngiti." Entries are accepted until August 17, 2001 in all Jollibee stores nationwide.

Endorsed by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) and Ilustrador ng Kabataan (INK), this contest is sponsored by PET Plans, Inc. and Faber-Castell.



Jollibee in Pioneer St. delights customers!

Jollibee trio delights Pasig!

Pasig has another added attraction as three new Jollibee stores perk it up! With new, convenient locations to choose from, one can never be far from langhap-sarap goodness.

The first store is at Manggahan Village Center, at the corner of Amang Rodriguez Center Avenue. Other strategically located drive-thru stores are in Jollibee One Mercedes Plaza, at the corner of Mercedes and Market Ave. in Barangay San Miguel; and in Jollibee Pioneer Centre, at the corner of Pioneer and United Streets in Barangay Kapitolyo.

All three stores provide the best quality in food and service, as well as warm, enjoyable ambience.

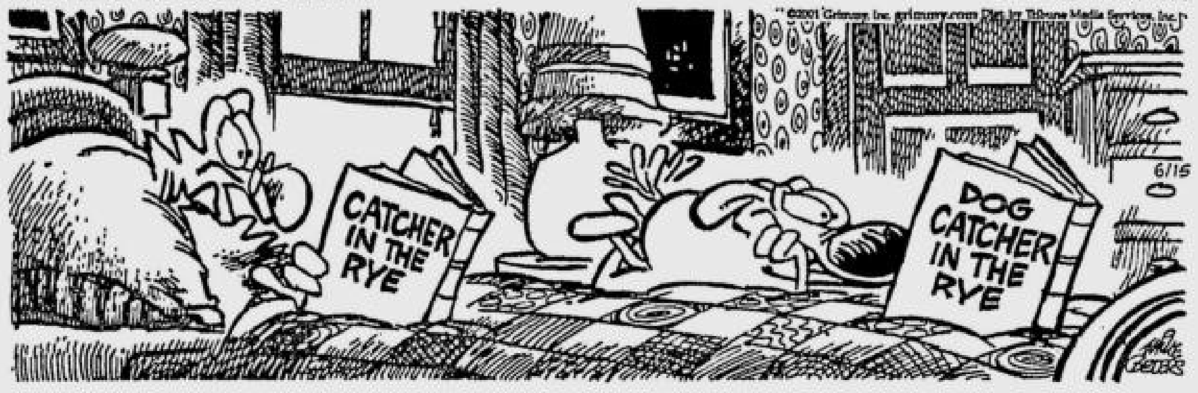
For feedback, comments, suggestions, please write to:

Jollibee Journal
c/o the Marketing Division, Jollibee Center
San Miguel Ave., Pasig City, Philippines
journal@jollibee.com.ph

Jollibee

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS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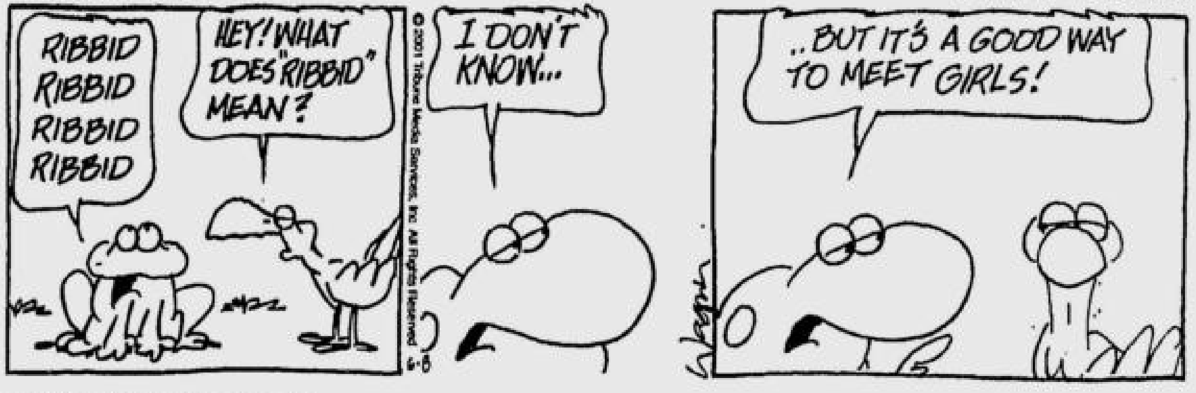
CATCHER IN THE RYE
DOG CATCHER IN THE RYE
6/15
MIKE PETERS

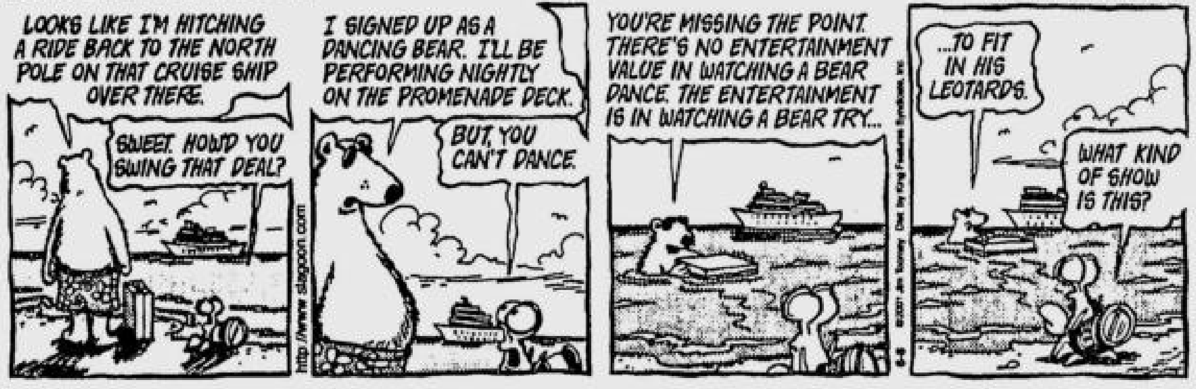
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


RIBBID RIBBID RIBBID RIBBID
HEY! WHAT DOES "RIBBID" MEAN?
© 2001 Tribune Media Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved
6-8
I DON'T KNOW...
..BUT IT'S A GOOD WAY TO MEET GIRLS!

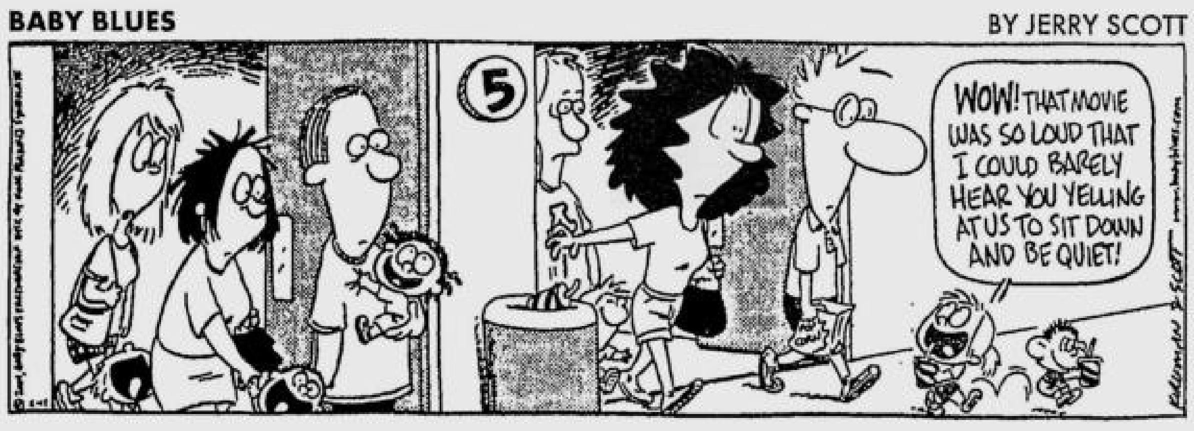
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


LOOKS LIKE I'M HITCHING A RIDE BACK TO THE NORTH POLE ON THAT CRUISE SHIP OVER THERE.
SWEET. HOW'D YOU SWING THAT DEAL?
http://www.slagoon.com
I SIGNED UP AS A DANCING BEAR. I'LL BE PERFORMING NIGHTLY ON THE PROMENADE DECK.
BUT, YOU CAN'T DANCE.
YOU'RE MISSING THE POINT. THERE'S NO ENTERTAINMENT VALUE IN WATCHING A BEAR DANCE. THE ENTERTAINMENT IS IN WATCHING A BEAR TRY...
©2001 Jim Toomey Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.
...TO FIT IN HIS LEOTARDS.
WHAT KIND OF SHOW IS THIS?

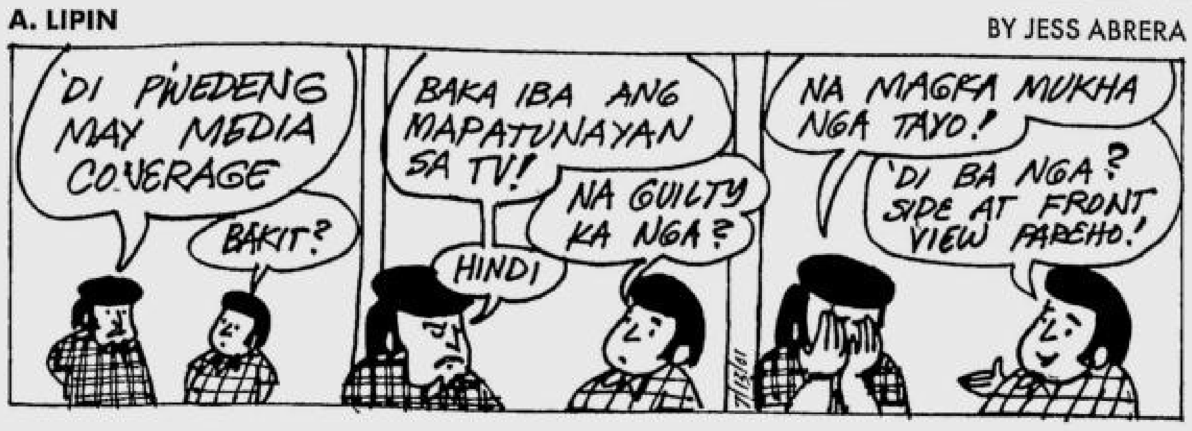
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


5
WOW! THAT MOVIE WAS SO LOUD THAT I COULD BARELY HEAR YOU YELLING AT US TO SIT DOWN AND BE QUIET!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
www.babyblues.com

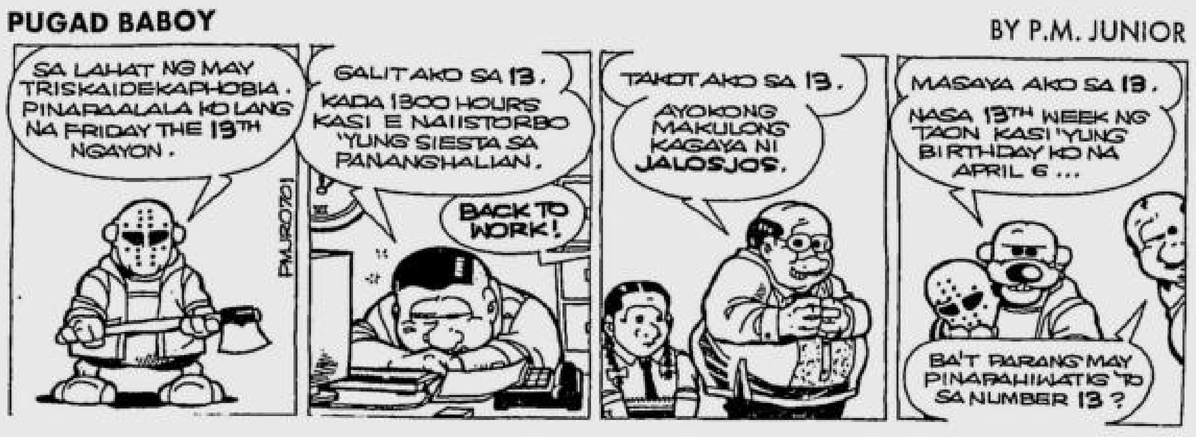
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


'DI PWEDENG MAY MEDIA COVERAGE
BAKIT?
BAKA IBA ANG MAPATUNAYAN SA TV!
HINDI
NA GUILTY KA NGA?
7/13/01
NA MAGKA MUKHA NGA TAYO!
'DI BA NGA? SIDE AT FRONT VIEW PAREHO!

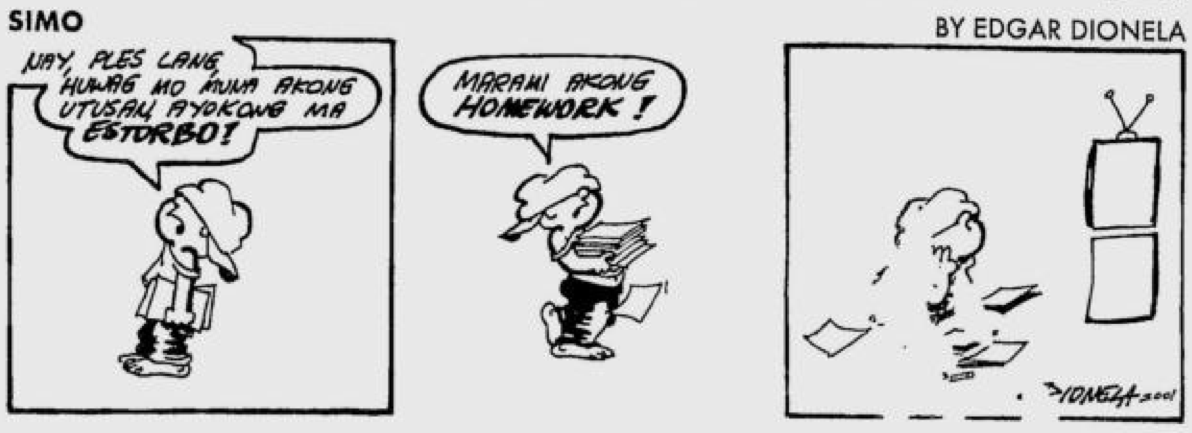
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SA LAHAT NG MAY TRISKAIDEKAPHOBIA. PINAPAALALA KO LANG NA FRIDAY THE 13TH NGAYON.
PMJR0701
GALIT AKO SA 13. KADA 1300 HOURS KASI E NAIISTORBO 'YUNG SIESTA SA PANANGHALIAN.
BACK TO WORK!
TAKOT AKO SA 13. AYOKONG MAKULONG KAGAYA NI JALOSJOS.
MASAYA AKO SA 13. NASA 13TH WEEK NG TAON KASI 'YUNG BIRTHDAY KO NA APRIL 6...
BA'T PARANG MAY PINAPAHIWATIG 'TO SA NUMBER 13?

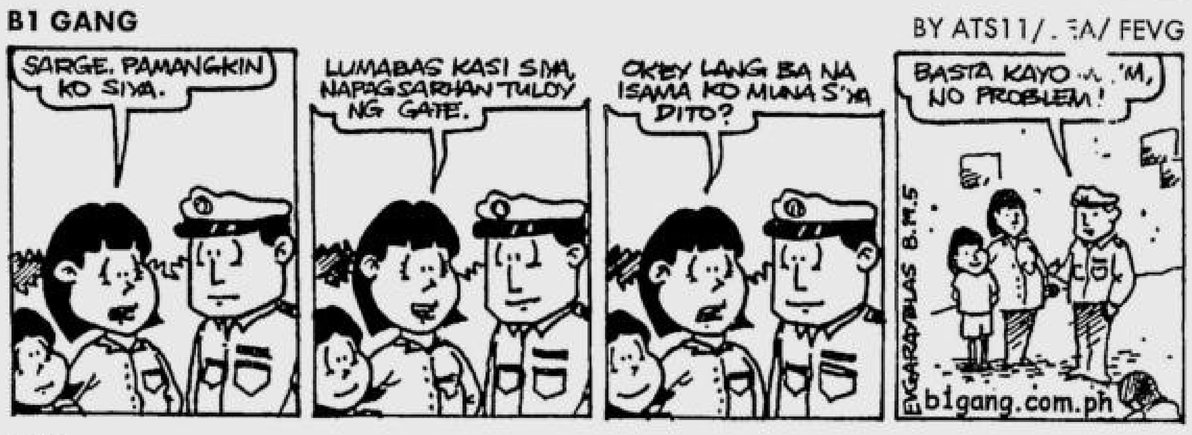
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


NAY, PLES LANG HUWAG MO MUNA AKONG UTUSAN AYOKONG MA ESTORBO!
MARAMI AKONG HOMEWORK!
DIONELA 2001

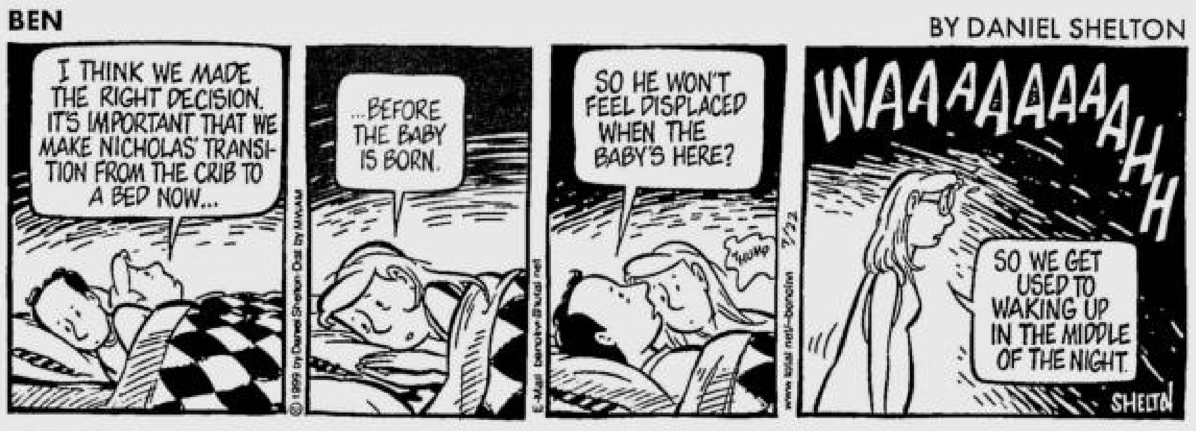
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ .EA/ FEVG


SARGE. PAMANGKIN KO SIYA.
LUMABAS KASI SIYA, NAPAGSARHAN TULOY NG GATE.
OK'EY LANG BA NA ISAMA KO MUNA S'YA DITO?
BASTA KAYO MA'M, NO PROBLEM!
EVGARAYBLAS B.M.5
b1gang.com.ph

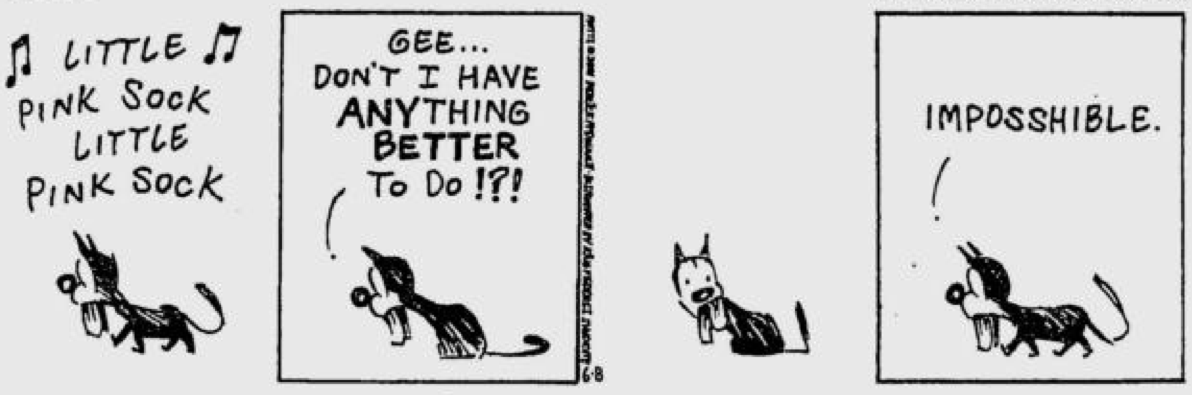
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I THINK WE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION. IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE MAKE NICHOLAS' TRANSITION FROM THE CRIB TO A BED NOW...
© 1999 by Daniel Shelton Dist. by NAS
...BEFORE THE BABY IS BORN.
SO HE WON'T FEEL DISPLACED WHEN THE BABY'S HERE?
7/22
WAAAAAAAAAHH
SO WE GET USED TO WAKING UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.
SHELTON

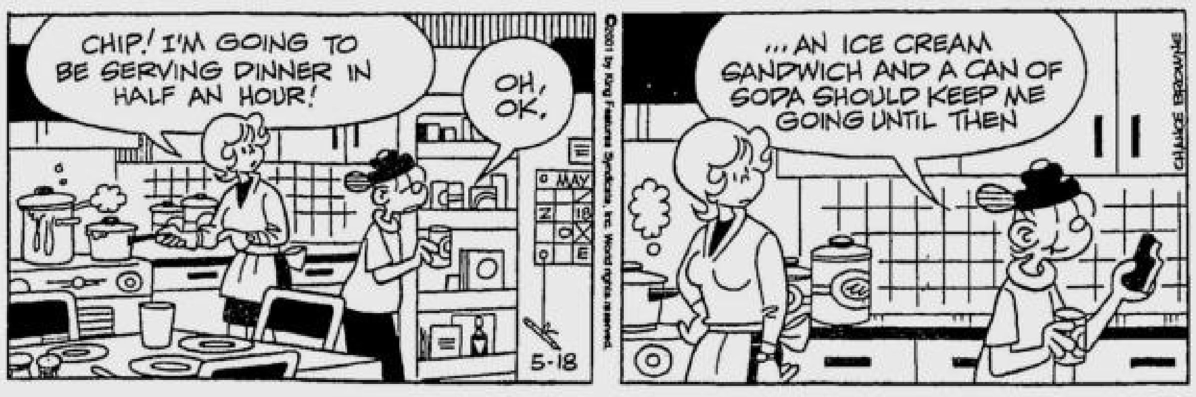
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


♫ LITTLE ♫ PINK SOCK LITTLE PINK SOCK
GEE... DON'T I HAVE ANYTHING BETTER TO DO !?!
6-8
IMPOSSHIBLE.

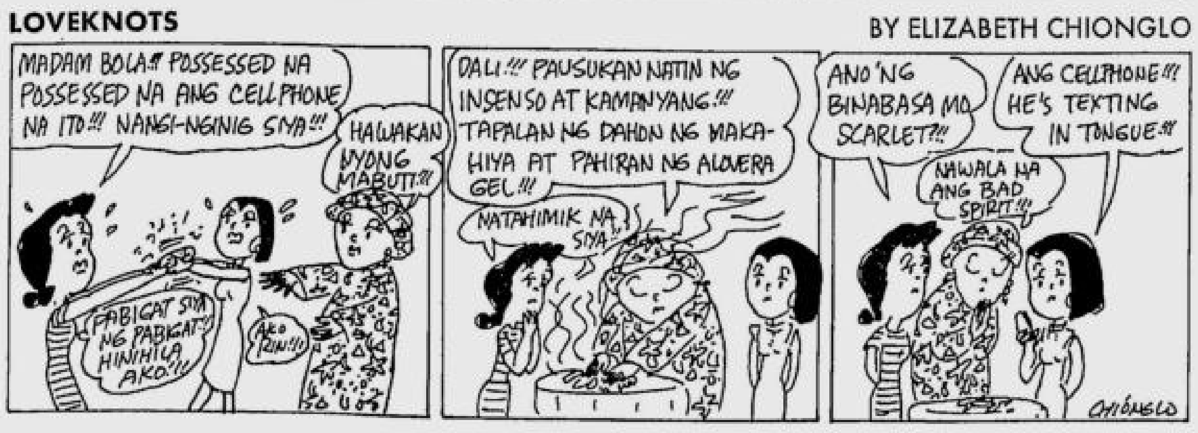
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


CHIP! I'M GOING TO BE SERVING DINNER IN HALF AN HOUR!
OH, OK.
©2001 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
5-18
...AN ICE CREAM SANDWICH AND A CAN OF SODA SHOULD KEEP ME GOING UNTIL THEN
CHANCE BROWNE

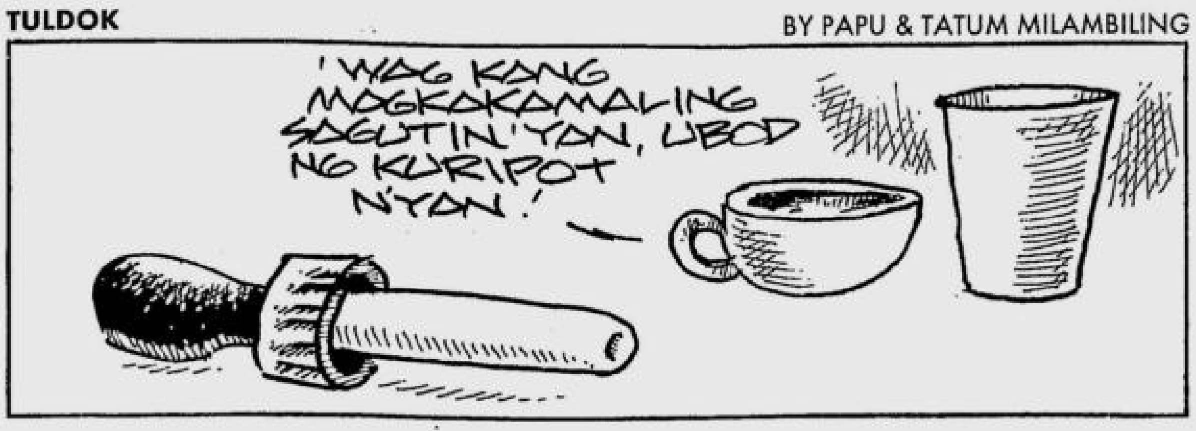
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MADAM BOLA!!! POSSESSED NA POSSESSED NA ANG CELLPHONE NA ITO!!! NANGI-NGINIG SIYA!!!
HAWAKAN NYONG MABUTI!!!
PABIGAT SIYA NG PABIGAT!! HINIHILA AKO!!!
AKO RIN!!!
DALI!!! PAUSUKAN NATIN NG INSENSO AT KAMANYANG!!! TAPALAN NG DAHON NG MAKAHIYA AT PAHIRAN NG ALOVERA GEL!!!
NATAHIMIK NA SIYA.
ANO'NG BINABASA MO SCARLET?!!
ANG CELLPHONE!!! HE'S TEXTING IN TONGUE!!!
NAWALA NA ANG BAD SPIRIT!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


'WAG KANG MAGKAKAMALING SAGUTIN 'YAN, UBOD NG KURIPOT N'YAN.'

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Harrison Ford, Cheech Marin, Patrick Stewart, Jack Kemp, Didi Conn, Giancarlo Giannini

Happy Birthday: OK, so you won't be certain about your personal life or direction, but think of the possibilities that exist in your professional life and put your efforts into your work, educational pursuits and travel. You can't lose if you keep busy and move forward in a positive manner. The worst thing you can do this year is sit idle waiting for others to do for you. Get moving. Your numbers: 6, 19, 23, 25, 31, 36

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You need to do something about the lack of harmony in your personal life. If your partner won't help, then you might have to consider moving on to a more tranquil setting.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will be tempted to get involved in a secret affair. It's not worth the aggravation. Try to avoid situations that could lead to a lack of trust and dishonesty.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't be daunted by criticism. Unreliable people will be negative. You can't waste time worrying about those you can't sway. Work on the rest who understand your reasoning.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Emotional upset will be due to deception where partnerships are concerned. You must be extremely careful not to let relatives or friends interfere in your personal life.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your communicative skills will help you persuade others to see things your way. Don't stop at that; put yourself in a leadership position. You have a lot to offer and everyone knows it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will tend to overspend on children, friends, entertainment and whatever else tempts you. Don't be surprised if your partner tries to cut you off.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't push your luck or your lover. Make an effort to keep the peace. Nothing is worth the emotional loss you will suffer if you don't play fair in your personal life.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Be careful when dealing with co-workers. They may twist your words. Be prepared to make changes. Your stubbornness will hold you back. Leave your work at the office.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You need a change of pace. Look into activities that will take you in new directions and introduce you to new friends. Boredom is your worst enemy. You need to take control of your life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Expect someone you live with to cause trouble. You are not likely to rectify the problem easily. If he or she wants to leave, so be it. You must reconsider your reasons for being in this situation.

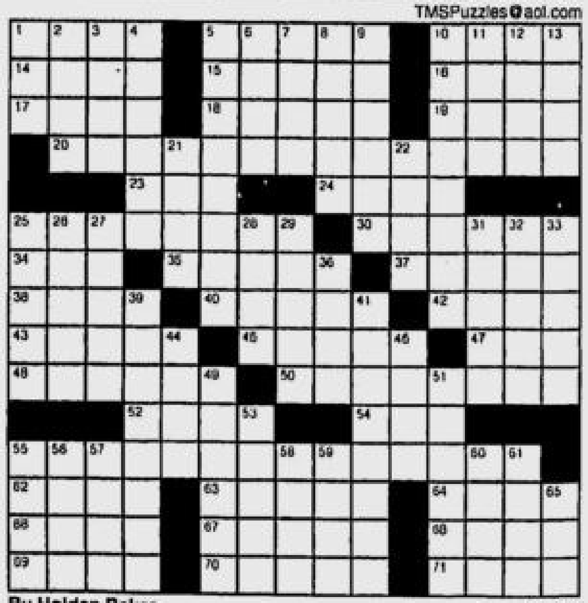
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Put your efforts into promising activities, and get back to basics. Your desire to travel will lead you into unknown territory. Someone you live with won't be happy with the changes you make.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't spend needlessly. You will have a hard time handling it if your partner insists on being extravagant. Put your time into satisfying but inexpensive projects.

Birthday Baby: You are quick, to the point and eager to get things done. You will amaze everyone with your intelligent approach to everything.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Holden Baker
Greenfield, MA

5/28/01

ACROSS

1 Light tan
5 Coarse files
10 Iowa State location
14 Bank deal
15 Bring to bear
16 Eye signal
17 Wise Men
18 Vitality
19 Gibb or Garcia
20 South-of-the-border drink
23 Function
24 Oklahoma city
25 Indy 500 location
30 Computer snag
34 That's __ folks!
35 Eagle's abode
37 January in Spain
38 Molten flow
40 "Still Me" writer
42 Wildebeests
43 Slightly inclined
45 Awake and aware
47 Tiger's peg
48 Authoritarian ruler
50 Checkers, in Chelsea
52 Columnist Caen
54 Pedro's Mrs.
55 North-of-the-border song
62 Part of U.A.E.
63 Transparent
64 "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" composer
66 Bosun's whistle
67 Plains tribe
68 View from Cleveland
69 Ago
70 Yarns
71 Horn honk

DOWN

1 Nightmare street?
2 Paint layer
3 Fury
4 One of a kind
5 Critic
6 Leafstalk angle
7 Nintendo rival
8 Ordinary language
9 Like guitars and tennis racquets
10 Granting as merited
11 Short, skirtwise
12 Comes to a conclusion
13 Hebrides island
21 Turkey-label letters
22 Aswan's river
25 Waldorf or Caesar
26 Serving dish
27 The King
28 Domain
29 Investment return
31 Tithe amount
32 Vinegar bottle
33 Firefighter's carries?
36 At all times
39 Language symbols
41 Rubbed-out spots
44 __ the line (obeyed)
46 Change direction
49 Ribbed cloth
51 O-ring, e.g.
53 Light wood
55 Dogpatch creator
56 Song by Verdi
57 Snoozes
58 "Hud" co-star
59 Wise guy
60 Architect Saarinen
61 Small group
65 Fisherman's profit?

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

E	D	I	C	T	■	M	O	L	E	■	G	E	A	R
P	R	O	H	I	B	I	T	E	D	■	A	L	M	A
C	A	T	A	P	U	L	T	E	D	■	L	I	A	R
O	M	A	R	■	G	L	O	R	Y	■	V	A	S	E
T	A	S	T	E	L	E	S	S	■	O	A	K	S	■
■	■	■	■	L	E	N	■	■	D	Y	N	A	M	O
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S	T	I	R	■	C	U	R	E	R	■	O	L	L	A
N	U	D	E	■	O	R	N	A	M	E	N	T	A	L
A	R	A	L	■	I	R	I	D	E	S	C	E	N	T
G	E	L	S	■	F	O	E	S	■	P	O	R	T	S

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5/28/01

A hall-of-famer American designer

Halston transcended the disco decade by reinventing everything in fashion, from the twinset to the caftan

Halston: An American Original
By Elaine Gross & Fred Rottoman
228 pages

BY CHERISH GARCIA HERNANDEZ

REVIEW

AS fashion reverts to the '70s and '80s, designers are getting ideas from people who revolutionized the way we dress. One such icon was Halston, whose minimalist designs, pantsuits, sportswear, shirt dress, twinsets and draped columns are considered classics.

Bill Blass calls him the "quintessential American designer." His movie-star good looks, high-flying lifestyle and glamorous friends made him THE designer of the '70s. He dressed all the beautiful people of that era; Grace Kelly, Liza Minelli, Elizabeth Taylor and Bebe Paley were his regular clients. He partied at the famous Studio 54 with pals Andy Warhol and Bianca Jagger, and he held court at the Olympic Tower on 5th Avenue with the spires of St. Patrick's Cathedral serving as a backdrop.

Household name

In the book "Halston: An American Original," fashion assistant Elaine Gross and former Halston assistant Fred Rottoman succeed in demystifying the man whom many consider as the pantheon of American design.

Born in Des Moines, Iowa, Roy Halston Frowick had always gone by his middle name to avoid being confused with an uncle named Roy. Halston was actually taken from his maternal grandfather Halston Holmes. The young Halston showed an inclination for design by dressing up his sister and making her walk down Main Street to see other people's reactions. He ended up designing hats in Chicago. In 1959, he left for New York City to work for the famous French milliner Lilly Dache. After only two years he was named co-designer. He later was hired by the department store Bergdorf Goodman, where he became the store's first designer to have his name placed on the hats he designed. This was a feat that his successor Adolpho failed to accomplish. At that time department stores only carried their own labels. Working in a store like Bergdorf's offered Halston the opportunity to meet many influential people.

But it was in 1962, after designing the famous pillbox hat that Jackie Kennedy wore to her husband's inauguration that Halston became a household name. Oleg Cassini designed Jackie's dress but Halston was the designer behind the hat that was copied across America.

Halston ventured into clothes when he designed his first RTW line for Bergdorf Goodman. In 1968, he opened his own salon and quickly became the most-sought after designer of the disco decade.

Gross and Rottoman's well-researched and intimate account of Halston's career reveals a Halston who was more than just a designer. He had an innate sense of style that showed in his clothes. They write, "Halston believes that all clothes should be as comfortable and easy to wear as sportswear, but elegant at the same time. Almost more important than the way they looked was how they felt on the body. That theory set the precedent from which modern minimalist fashion was derived." Halston reinvented everything, from the twinset to the caftan. He used fabrics like matte jersey and his signature Ultrasuede. His classic elegant asymmetrical dresses and tie-front strapless one-piece dress can still be worn today and look very modern.

Sense of drama

Halston also had great flair and a sense of drama, which added to his appealing image. When the airline Braniff sponsored an Acapulco junket as publicity for their newly designed Halston uniforms, Halston and his models (fondly called Halstonettes) made a grand entrance to the beachside party. They arrived in boats, each wearing a different style of black bathing suit, huge mirrored lens sunglasses, huge black straw hats and Elsa Peretti's diamonds by the yard.

When they went on a whirlwind tour of China, Japan and France, Halston and his entourage arrived at the JFK International airport in 10 limousines. And in his office, everyone had to pause when Sister Sledge was playing and the line "Halston, Gucci, Fiourucci" came on.

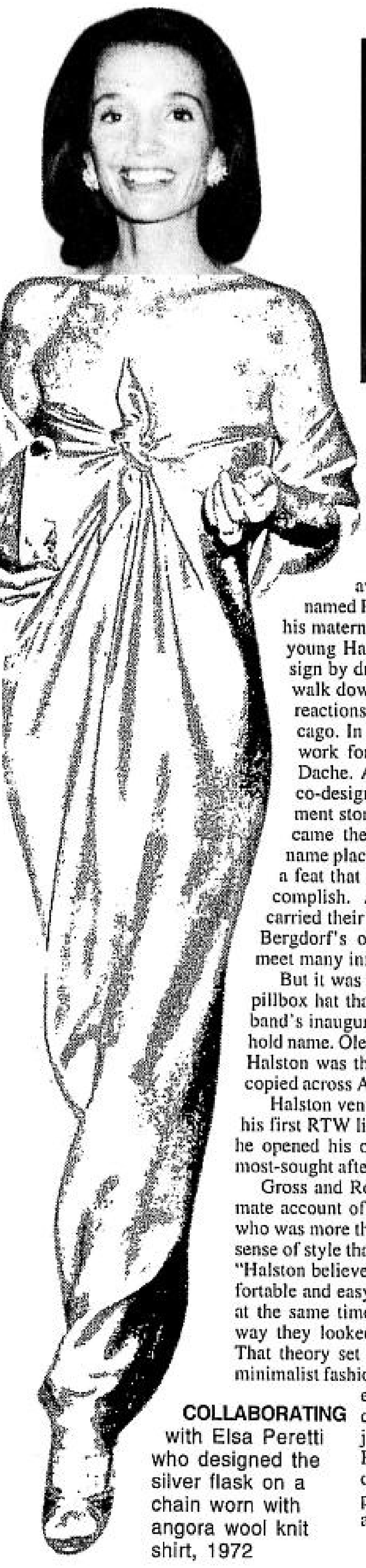
Although his critics could not understand what the fuss was all about, the designer known as "Mr. Clean" ingeniously created dresses that had no buttons, zippers, darts, seams or trimmings—nothing to detract from fabric and style, very much like the revered Madame Gres.

Unfortunately, Halston licensed his name to 31 different products including bed sheets and luggage, and later had legal problems using his own name, which led to his demise. In the beginning he was very "hands-on" and the success of his signature fragrance in the teardrop Elsa Peretti bottles was evidence of this. However, when the CEOs started to think more of profitability even at the expense of artistry, Halston lost control. In 1990 he succumbed to AIDS and died in his sleep.

Today, the Halston name is alive again. Designer Randolph Duke continues the Halston legacy, staying true to his vision, retaining his clean lines and resurrecting his fabrics. Minnie Driver's gorgeous red dress from the Oscars a few years back is a testament to this. The return of halter dresses and asymmetrical tops on today's fashion runways only proves that Halston was a modernist in the true sense of the word and one of the great designers of our time.

E-mail the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com

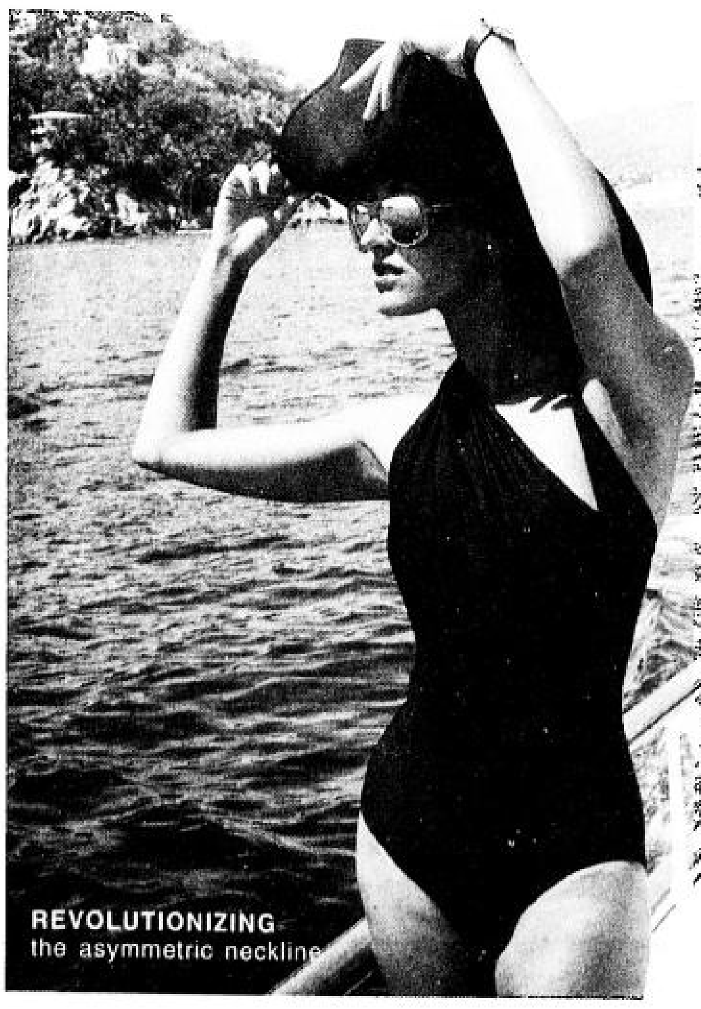
HALSTON'S pillbox hat worn by Jacqueline Kennedy at the inauguration of John F. Kennedy as president of the United States in 1961 set the trend in millinery.


COLLABORATING with Elsa Peretti who designed the silver flask on a chain worn with angora wool knit shirt, 1972

HALSTON and Bianca Jagger at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's annual Costume Institute dinner in 1977

LEE Radziwill's tie-front, one-piece strapless dress became one of Halston's signatures.

HALSTON went against the tide of couture and fantasy by creating minimalist looks such as this bias cut silk tunic and pants in 1976. Heads would turn if a woman wore a Halston pantsuit for dinner.


REVOLUTIONIZING the asymmetric neckline

INSPIRED by his collaboration with Martha Graham, Halston revolutionized the bodysuit which is known today as the unitard.

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Trend Spotting

ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

> The astrological formation indicates good opportunities for the growth of our economy and even international recognition for us as a nation

Jupiter in Cancer brings hope and promise

By Resti H. Santiago

ACCORDING to the wisdom of astrology, the planets, despite their distance, play a significant role in the development of life on earth. The planets' movement sets the flow of trends to come. The most noticeable among the planets is Jupiter, mainly because of its size and positive influence.

Jupiter will be moving into the zodiac sign of Cancer on July 13 till Aug. 2, 2002. This means that trends for the next 12 months will be centered on this feminine and home-loving sign.

Business

Jupiter is the biggest planet and astrological symbolism associates it with expansion. This indicates that there will be an abundance of things ruled by Cancer and there will be mass attention on domestic matters. Hence, there will be renewed demand for home decor, appliances, decorating materials, and even larger homes. As the stomach is also connected with Cancer, good food will also be much appreciated by more people.

Enterprising businessmen will benefit if they will ride along this business trend. Women are particularly favored during Jupiter in Cancer periods and we will see more of them rise in the business arena.

Relationship

On relationship matters, much improvement can occur. Jupiter is strong in Cancer and it can function well in this sign. There will be an abundance of loving feelings and due to this, families, friends and lovers can get closer to one another. Family members will now devote more time for the home and family. Entertainment that caters to the family as an audience will be well received. Games and movies that the whole family can enjoy together will be in demand. More unmarried couples will tie the knot and have babies during this period. Naturally, baby care and other products for babies will do well in the market.

Individuals

On the personal level, this influence of Jupiter in Cancer can make us more attuned to the call of emotions. If for the past 12 months, we put

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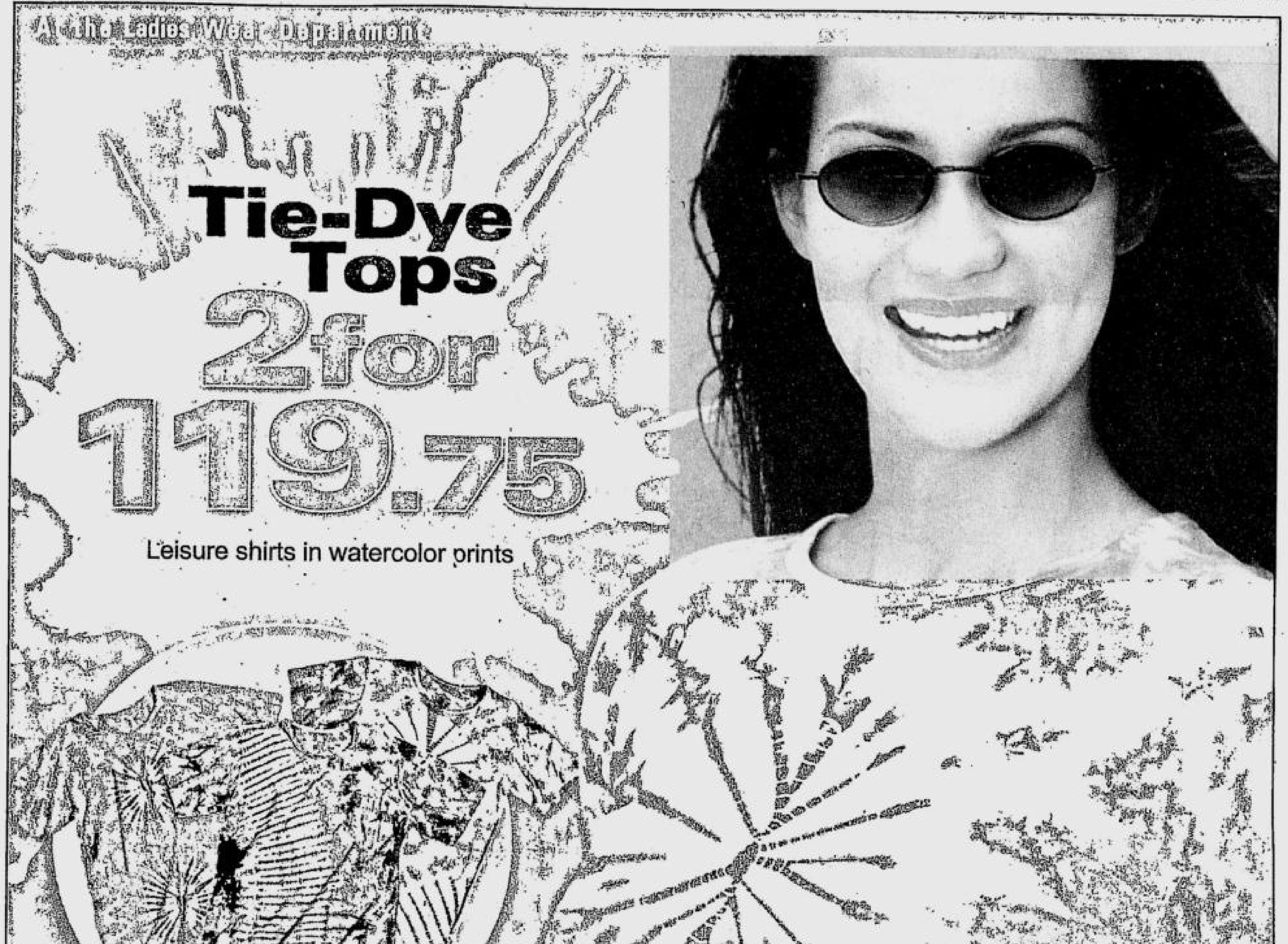
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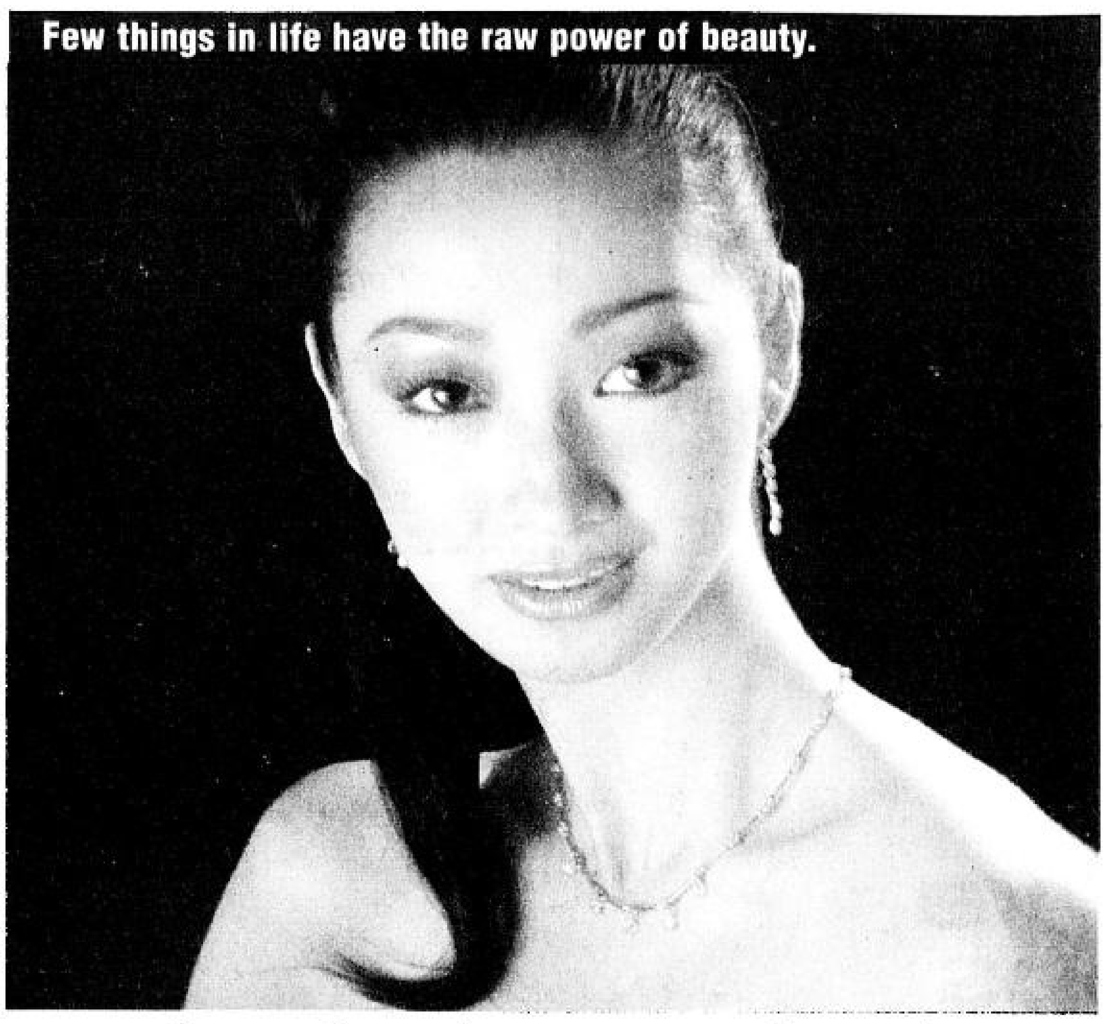
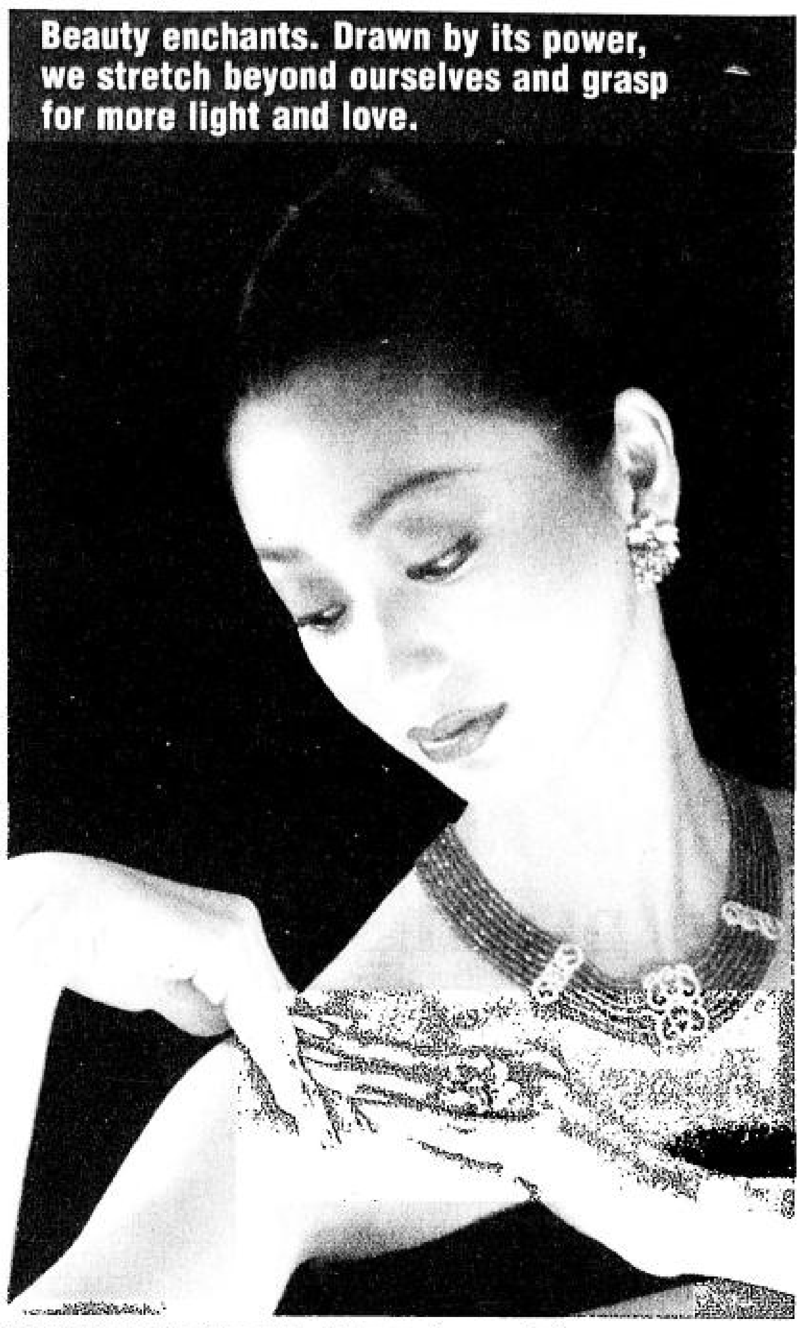


Few things in life have the raw power of beauty.

PHOTOS BY RAYMOND LAUCHENGCO

DELICATELY feminine diamond earrings and necklace with briolette diamond dangles in 18k yellow gold

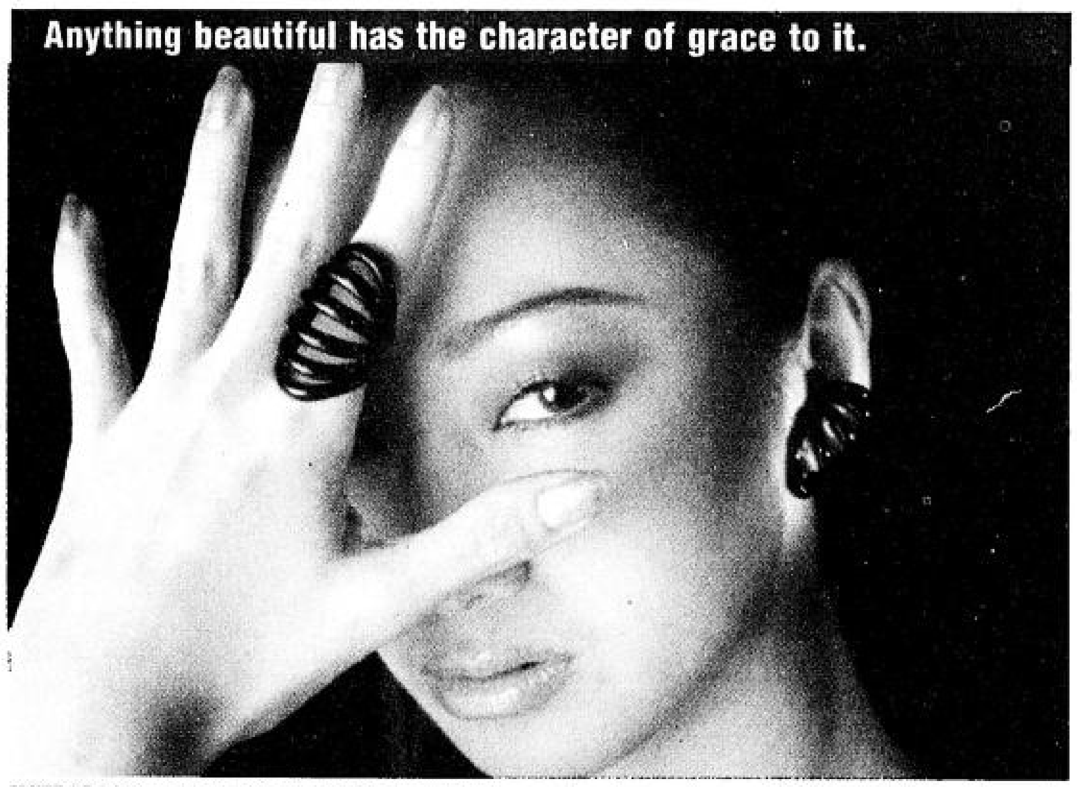
It does not let us be indifferent, but is inherently provocative



Beauty enchants. Drawn by its power, we stretch beyond ourselves and grasp for more light and love.

SLEEK and black-coated silver earrings and ring

Beauty reminds us of who we are



Anything beautiful has the character of grace to it.

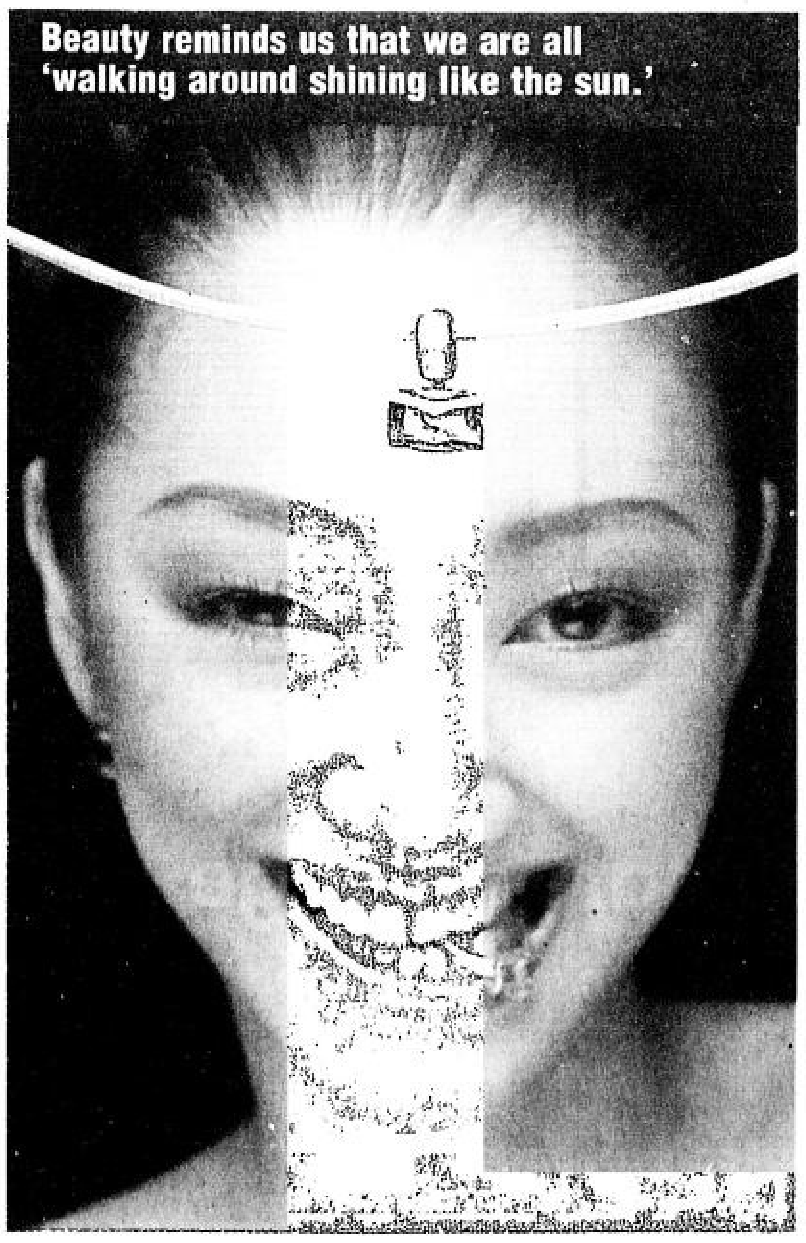
INTRICATE set of color-change garnets in smoky brown hues. Multistrand garnet bead necklace with fine diamond centerpiece, binders and clasp; grape-design earrings and ring with cognac and white diamonds, all in 18k white gold

Beauty awakens the soul by mirroring it, and the soul sees itself.

OPULENT classic *ballestado* earrings with marquise and brilliant-cut diamonds in 18k white gold

Like love, it softens the hard edges and invites one out of oneself.

AMETHYST and diamond pendant hanging from a twisted coil 18k white gold chain



Beauty reminds us that we are all 'walking around shining like the sun.'

THE RETURN of color-deep blue topaz earrings, ring and pendant with round double-cut diamonds in matte-finish 18k white gold

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Jupiter in Cancer brings hope and promise

(From page E1)

much emphasis on the outer world and on the gathering of facts, we should now be open to the depths of our emotions. What we thought right then must now be "felt right" in order to complete the cycle of knowing and being. This period is also good to look back at our past and release ourselves from inhibiting emotions of hurt, guilt and low self-esteem. Only after that can we truly harness the caring and loving energy of Cancer. To achieve wholeness, it will be worthwhile to return to our roots and renew our ties with our past. It will serve us well on the psychological level if we give our parents, especially the mother, what is due them.

The country

On the national level, Jupiter in Cancer brings promise and hope. The most commonly used chart of the country is based on the July 4, 1946 horoscope, which gives us a Cancerian nature. Jupiter is now going to bring luck to Cancerians (as well as the other water signs, Pisceans and Scorpios). This means that there will be more opportunities for the growth of our economy and even international recognition for us as a nation. These positive influences will become more definite starting halfway through the cycle of Jupiter, which will be early next year, when Jupiter touches the country's Sun and the Macapagal-Arroyo government's North Node.

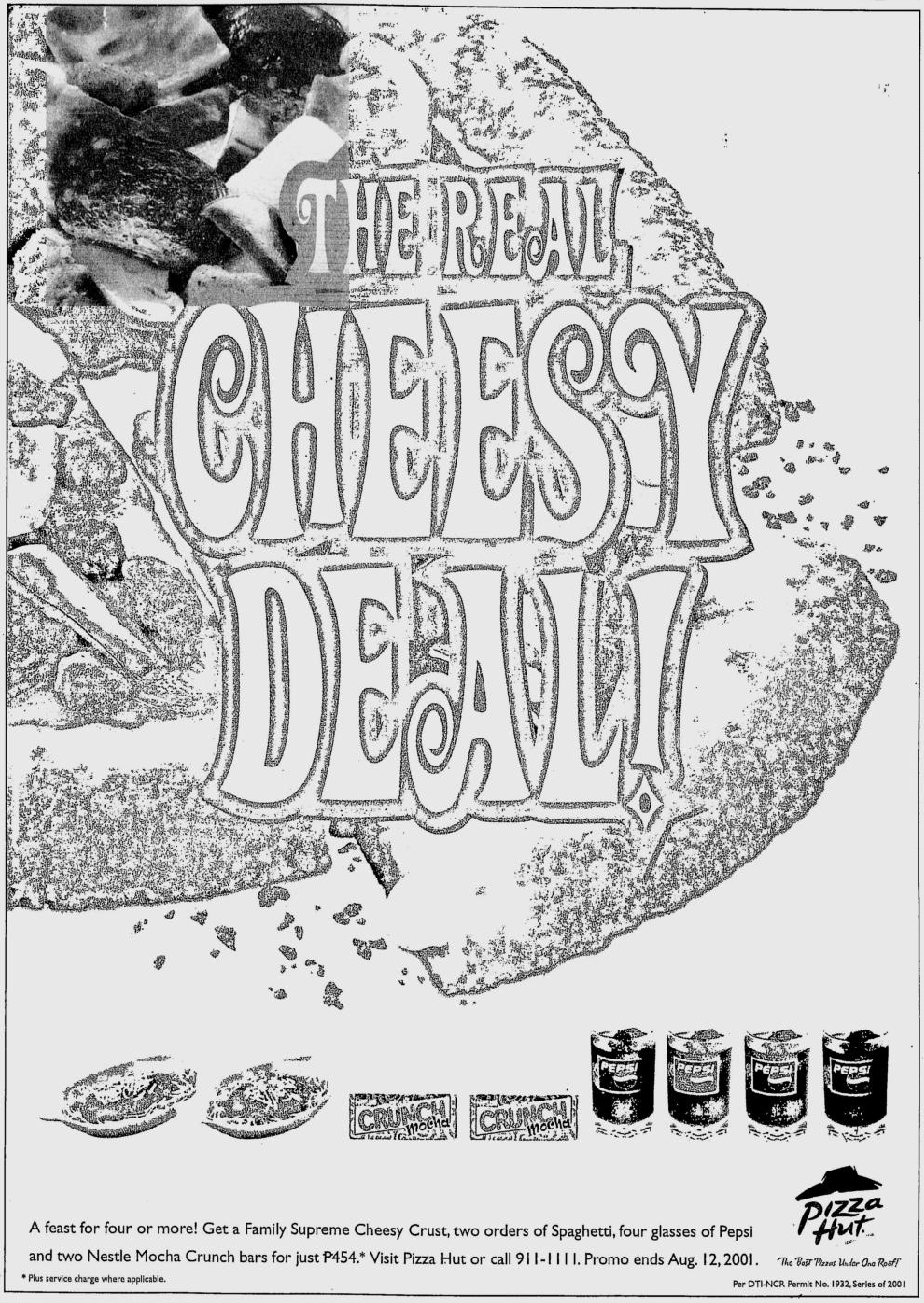
Warning signs

However, the country has a lot of issues to resolve and work on because the problems of our past are very much around us. The transformation of our collective psyche must continue. With the eclipse along Cancer-Capricorn axis on June 21, July 5 and Dec. 30 there will still be many challenges for the country.

Eclipses point to issues that must be addressed with urgency. Around these dates the issues are of right governance by our new leaders and the problems of food, shelter and security of the masses.

During this period we must show our solidarity in maintaining the gains of Edsa II, in learning the lessons of "Edsa III," and in working for genuine change in ourselves and in our country.

To know more what Jupiter in Cancer has in store for each of the zodiac signs, log on to www.pinoyastrologer.com. Surfers can also avail of free astrology readings.



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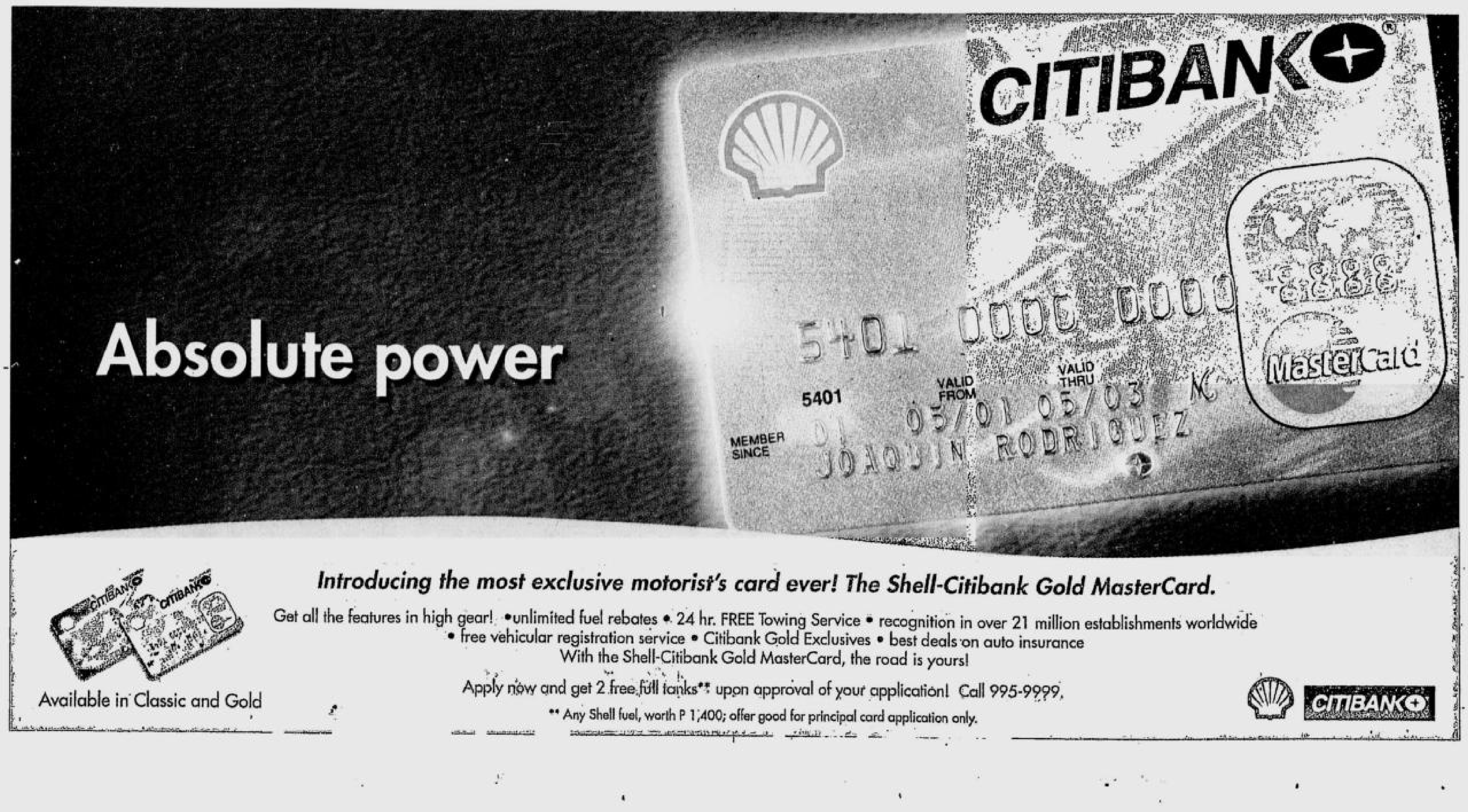

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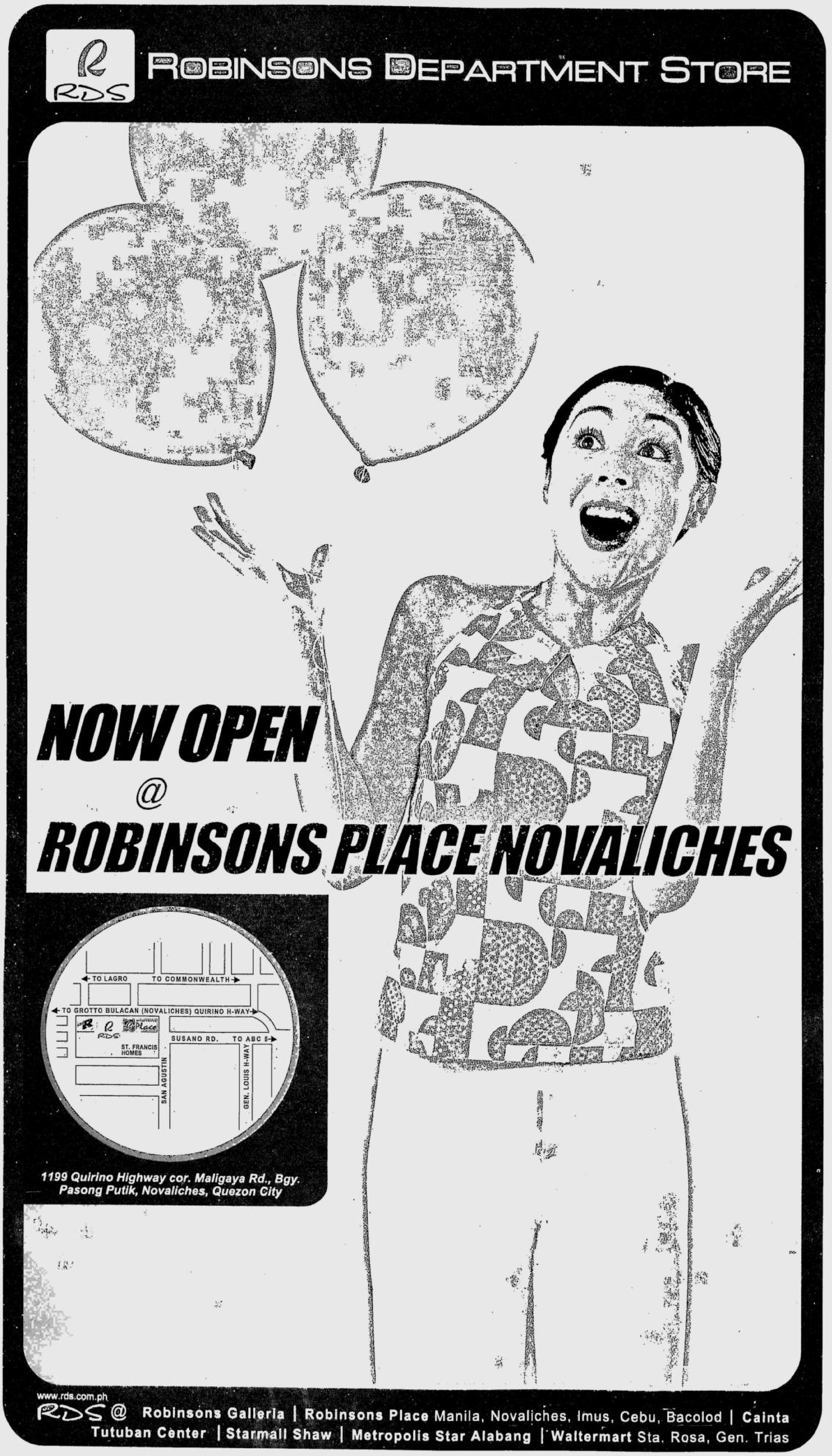

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Inner Mind workshop

JAIME T. Licauco of Inner Mind Development Institute conducts seminar on "Soul Mates, Karma and Reincarnation" on July 14, 1-7 p.m. and "Basic ESP and Intuition Development" on July 21-22, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Rm. 308 Prince Plaza Bldg. 1, 106 Legaspi St. Greenbelt, Makati. Call 892-6806 or 810-7245.

GOINGS-ON

BOOK SIGNING. Vincent Boudreau, author of "Grass Roots and Cadre in the Protest Movement," will sign copies of the book on July 16, 4-6 p.m., at Ateneo Press booth of the Academic Book Fair, Bahay ng Alumni, UP Diliman. The book takes us behind the scenes of rallies and mass gatherings. By letting us see what happens before and after the banners are unfurled, the author invites us to speculate on the social dynamics of protest. "Grass Roots" and all other Ateneo University Press books will be sold at discounted prices during the five-day book fair. Call 426-5984 or 426-6001, local 4612.

CATERING SEMINAR. Maya Kitchen Culinary Center holds a catering seminar tomorrow, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., 8/F Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue, Pasay Road, Makati. There will be lessons on portion control, costing, inventory, table layout, equipment sourcing and actual preparation of popular Filipino dishes. The hands-on seminar also tackles instruction on how to prepare, cook and present dishes such as *morcon*, *galantina*, pork *asado*, soy chicken, roast pork, baked macaroni, all-meat paella, three types of fried rice and desserts. After the class, there will be a special course featuring Maya Quick and Easy Gulaman. Featured recipes are cathedral window, coffee jelly, almond jelly, fruity chewy salad, 24-hour salad, fresh crab salad and *buko pandan*, with food styling preparation. Call 892-1185 or 892-5011, local 108.

ANNIVERSARY SALE. La Pagayo is celebrating its fifth year anniversary by giving away discounts of up to 70 percent off on all items. Take your pick from among La Pagayo's colorful collection of casual shirts, pants and skirts. La Pagayo is also offering limited edition Leaf-fit watch for every single purchase worth P5,000 or P10,000 accumulated receipts. The watches have classic metal face and translucent strap that comes in flimsy blue and cool white colors. Visit La Pagayo at Glorietta 3, Robinsons-Ermita, SM Megamall, Rockwell Power Plant, SM Southmall, SM Manila, SM Pampanga and Rustan's Tower. Sale ends on Aug 19.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE EXPO. The Expo Trade Hall at 4/L of Festival Supermall, Filinvest Alabang is hosting the Food and Beverage Expo 2001 ongoing until July 18. Exhibit includes product sampling, food and beverage tasting and cooking demonstration. Call 820-7879 or 820-1570.

DINNER DANCE. Food Caterers Association of the Philippines holds a fellowship and dinner dance on July 17 at the ballroom of Heritage Hotel, Roxas Boulevard. Call Nina Marasigan at 911-4852 or 913-5406.

HOMEOPATHY SEMINAR. The Age of Aquarius Center holds seminars on "Detoxification and Cleansing and Homeopathic Remedies for the Home" on July 21 and 28, 2-6 p.m., at UG/L 20 Cityland Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City. Call 751-9114 or 725-4968.

Trend Spotting

DERRICK models Oxygen's Morrocan look—a round-neck quarter-sleeved shirt with pin-tuck details worn with tinted denims and fringed sarong.

Oxygen breathes life into fashion

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Wahoo Guerrero

OXYGEN aims to breathe life into the youngster's staid wardrobe.

As movies, clubs and MTV fashion reaffirm the message that it's hipper to be on the fringe, young Filipinos have become more adventurous in their fashion. Therefore, garment manufacturers are creating clothes that express the wearer's individuality.

Responding to this trend, the Cebuano company has developed Oxygen, a label that's geared for consumers who want to look stylish without looking formal or just plain hip. It's different from the sister label Penshoppe.

Revival

Bernido Liu and his friends Tony Albegas, Harley Yunan and Walter Cang started Penshoppe. They were architecture graduates from San Carlos University and wanted to revive the business of Liu's mother. The Lius had a garment factory in Novaliches that made clothes for the Baclaran market.

The young entrepreneurs saw an emerging youth market and decided to venture into Penshoppe. The business marked milestones in

OXYGEN/p.F2

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Jocelyn Arong
Sharra Ferry Idio
Ness Verallo
Pete T. Ortega
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Gay Hernandez
Girlie Rose D. Musica
Kristine Jane Ferro
Rodora B. Tabug
Robinsons Place Imus 4th Level
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Eleanor A. Magno
Marilyn Macatumpag
Festival Supermall - Third Level
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Cherry Ann B. Cabuhat
Jessibeth Perdiz
Lorena Santos
Mary Grace Osera
Merly Gomez
Susan S. Villanueva
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Edna Marie Juatan
Emely O. Agarano
Francia Atenico
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Josephine M. Lim
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June Criselle M. Lloren
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Zenia Escalera
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Aileen Altovar
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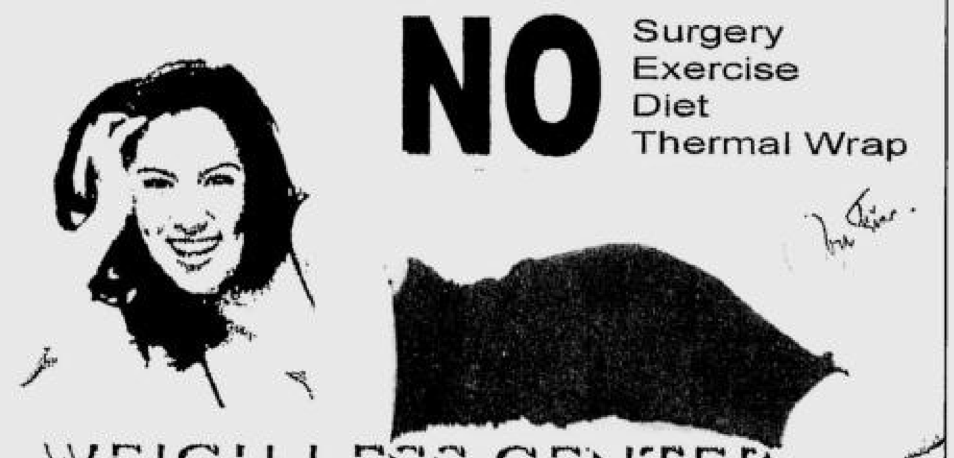

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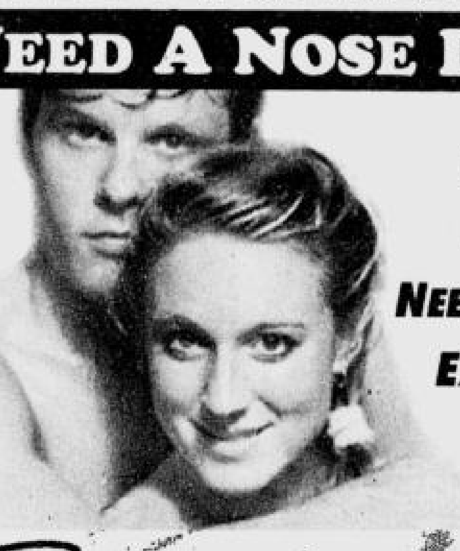

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Oxygen breathes life into fashion

The cousin of Penshoppe caters to edgy style taste

(From pgae F1)

our history. The first day of manufacturing began during People Power in 1986. Two years later, the store branched out to Manila. The opening of the free-standing store at SM North Edsa in June 1991coincided with the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. To the owners they seemed like omens—of the positive sort.

Penshoppe began with easy separates for teenagers. It exuded the Gap look—denims, khakis, cottons and plain patterns. Eventually, it diversified into shoes, towels and accessories.

With MTV, the rise of rave parties, clubwear and the influx of techno-toys, the market demanded more edgy stuff. They were looking for items such as pants with tons of pocket, zippers-on clothes for their gadgets. They wanted sexy outfits for the evening without looking stuffy. Guys were less afraid to show off their bodies with tighter clothing. Oxygen was developed to answer the need.

Quality control

Previously, most of Penshoppe's and Oxygen's products were manufactured locally. But with the demand for synthetic fabrics such as rayon, stretch and wash-and-wear materials, garment manufacturers find it more feasible to subcontract in China, Hong Kong, Thailand and India. These countries have factories that specialize in garments that handle special fabrics. The design team develops the idea. Quality control is checked at the factory floor with the suppliers.

Albert Ong, senior vice president for marketing of the mother company, Golden ABC Inc., explains the local garment supply chain lacks the competitive edge of our neighboring countries. Aside from the perpetual problem of lack of fabric and high production cost, deliveries of finished product are not always on time.

Oxygen has 29 outlets all over the country. Predictably, the big market comes from the urban areas. Men comprise about 60 percent of Oxygen's market. But these are not the big shoppers. They're happy with wearing a shirt again and again.

The store presents a new collection every month. For this shoot, photographer Wahoo Guerrero presents the Moroccan look by setting a romance off the African coast—actually the shoot was held in Matuod, Batangas. Kahlil Gibran's poetry interprets the mood of the photos.

MODELS: DERRICK RAMSAY AND BUBBLES PARAISO
MAKEUP BY ROBBIE PIÑERA FOR SEBASTIAN TG MAKEUP

I had gone a-begging from door to door along the village path.

BLUE cut-off tee in combed cotton worn over a canvas drawstring pants with tie-dyed sarong drape.

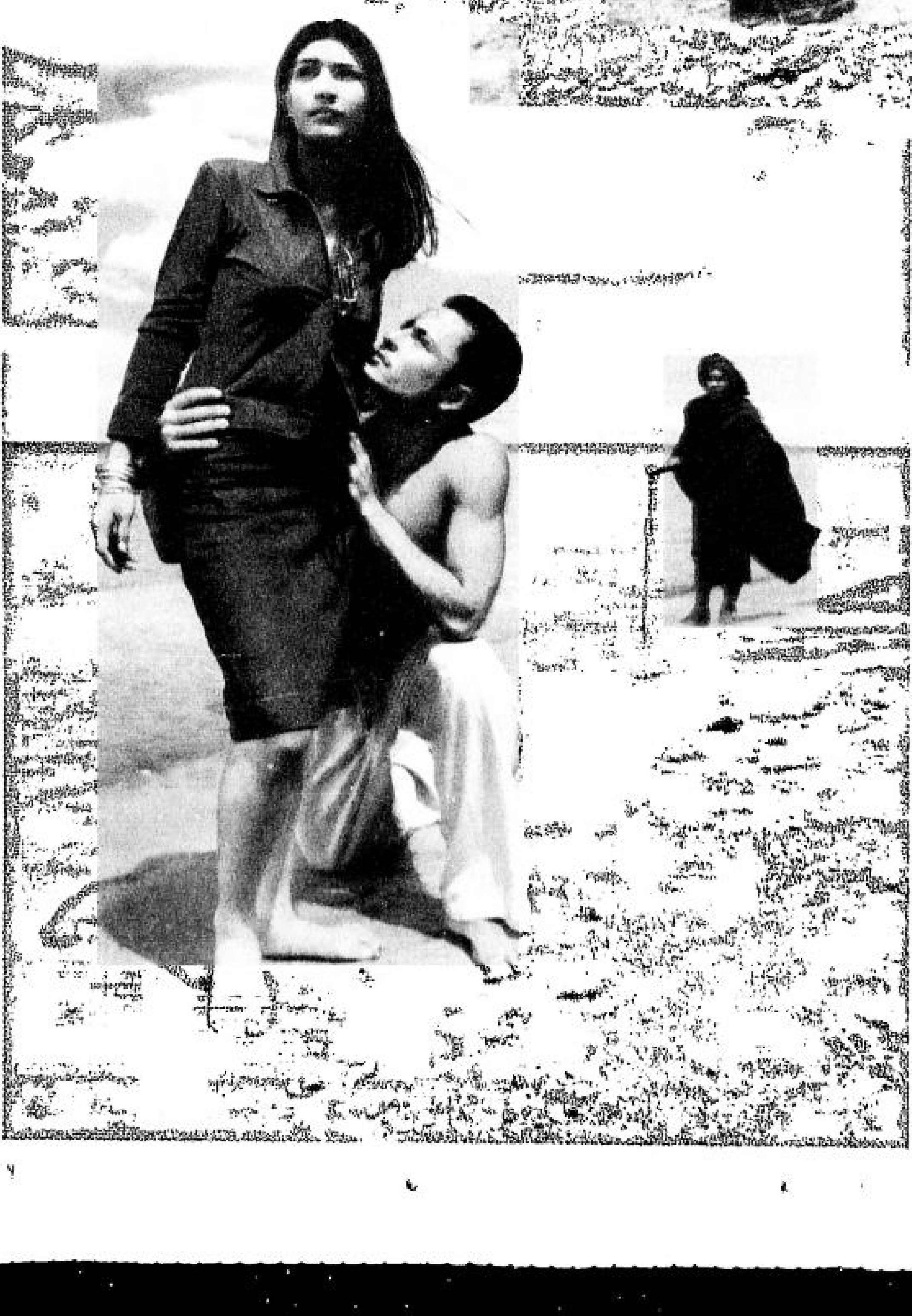
When thy chariot appeared in the distance, like a gorgeous dream.

BLACK bandeau worn with flared jeans and a short zipped skirt

My hopes rose high.

BUBBLES is wearing a checkered tank top with a laced back over a slim, short, stretched skirt. Derrick is wearing capris and T-shirt.

Thy glance fell on me and though cameth down with a smile.



SHE'S wearing a polycotton purple jacket-shirt over a denim skirt with patched pockets. He's wearing linen pants.

I felt that the luck of my life had come at last.

BUBBLES wears a cotton blouse with pin tucks over denim pants with checkered hem; Derrick wears a muscle shirt with linen pants.

Pants can enhance or downplay one's appearance

PANTS are the most reliable and comfortable match to any casual getup for both men and women. As a fashion tool, pants enhance or downplay an individual's height and figure.

In an effort to inform shoppers in choosing the best pants for them, Hang Ten Phils. lists down the five basic cuts of pants and how they affect the overall look of the wearer.

- Low-waist capri or clamdiggers (a.k.a. cutoffs, pedal pushers)—These are low-waist pants that end below the knees. Advisable for petite and boyish-bodied girls because they create an illusion of longer legs and shapely thighs.
- Boot-cut—Perfectly compliments curvaceous and full-bodied ladies and well-built guys because it hugs the thighs and is a bit flared at the bottom.
- Low-rise flared pants—Slim and shapely women will love wearing low-rise pants because it enhances leanness and height. Usually low-waisted, it is tight on the thighs with fan-like bottoms.
- Straight cut—Low-waist and straight-line from top to bottom. This cut does not emphasize curves that is why it is ideal for people with full bottom since it makes the buttocks look flatter and slimmer.
- Classic fit—The most popular cut. It is comfortable because of its straight bottom and room for the hips and thighs. Likewise, it apparently heightens the hips, making it advisable to skinny people.

Aside from the basic cuts, Hang Ten suggests utmost considerations on the design, wash, accessories and color of pants. The design and accessories must be in balance or in contrast with the top. Current fashion trends must likewise be checked in choosing the color and the wash.

According to Hang Ten, a shopper must ask these two questions before finally paying in the counter the pants s/he intends to purchase: "How many of the clothes in my closet can be worn with this pants?" and "Can I still wear these pants three years from now?"

Pants are an investment clothing because they are tested to withstand the test of fad and time.

Hang Ten is a haven of stylish and durable pants. The clothing shop has recently introduced in the Philippine market over 15 new designs to choose from—denims, twills or poplins that create a youthful cool look. Available at 31 stores in Metro Manila, Batangas, Cabanatuan, Cebu (SM and Ayala Center), SM Iloilo, SM Pampanga, Gaisano Davao and Robinsons Novaliches.

Hang Ten also has fashion accessories to complete a makeover—bags, shoes, caps and belts. All items sold locally are imported.

HANG Ten capri pants (left) for boyish-bodied ladies and straight-cut (right) pants

Sparklers

THREE years ago, Kara Alfonso was out shopping with her friends and her aunt, Sandy Olfato. "I was shopping for a bracelet," recalls Kara, who turns 14 this year.

"Everywhere we looked, it seemed that products for teenagers were being designed by people who didn't understand what we really wanted. I kept thinking it would be great to have a shop that caters specifically to teens like us. Well, it's a good thing Tita Sandy was listening, because she gave us just that."

Inspired by Kara's ideas, Sandy decided to put up a store that would answer every teenager's need to accessorize. Thus, Jammin' Gems was born.

Kara remains an integral part of the operations as business and marketing consultants. Even the store's name was conceptualized by Kara herself. "I ask Kara to feel free to criticize everything," Sandy says.

Jammin' Gems has slowly evolved into a total lifestyle boutique—with 16 kiosks at the top malls in Metro Manila. Jammin' Gems recently opened its first flagship store at the plush Rockwell Power Plant Mall.

With her team of teens complemented by artists and senior merchandisers, Sandy closely observes fashion trends both here and abroad. "We constantly try to take the nonconventional route by combining materials such as leather with beads, rubber and copper, and even sterling silver plated in gold. We have experimented with embroidery, New Age materials and metal alloys—all for the sake of finding the right look and the proper fit," she said.

Jammin' Gems product line consists of bracelets, rings, earrings, necklaces, find toe rings. But Sandy reveals the company is ready to venture into bags, belts, CD holders, watches and even a line of footwear for the ever-experimental young adults. Sandy explains that "wearability" is another important factor she considers in manufacturing her product line. Contrary to what we first thought, teens will not buy cutting-edge items, but will instead look for those which are affordable, practical and can be worn for all occasions," she adds.

A website will be launched this June, wherein shoppers can view the entire catalog of products. "The Jammin' Gems website will help me get closer to my market and will provide them with an easier way to reach men." Sandy explains the website will be very interactive because it also includes fashion tips while encouraging teens to share their thoughts on various topics.

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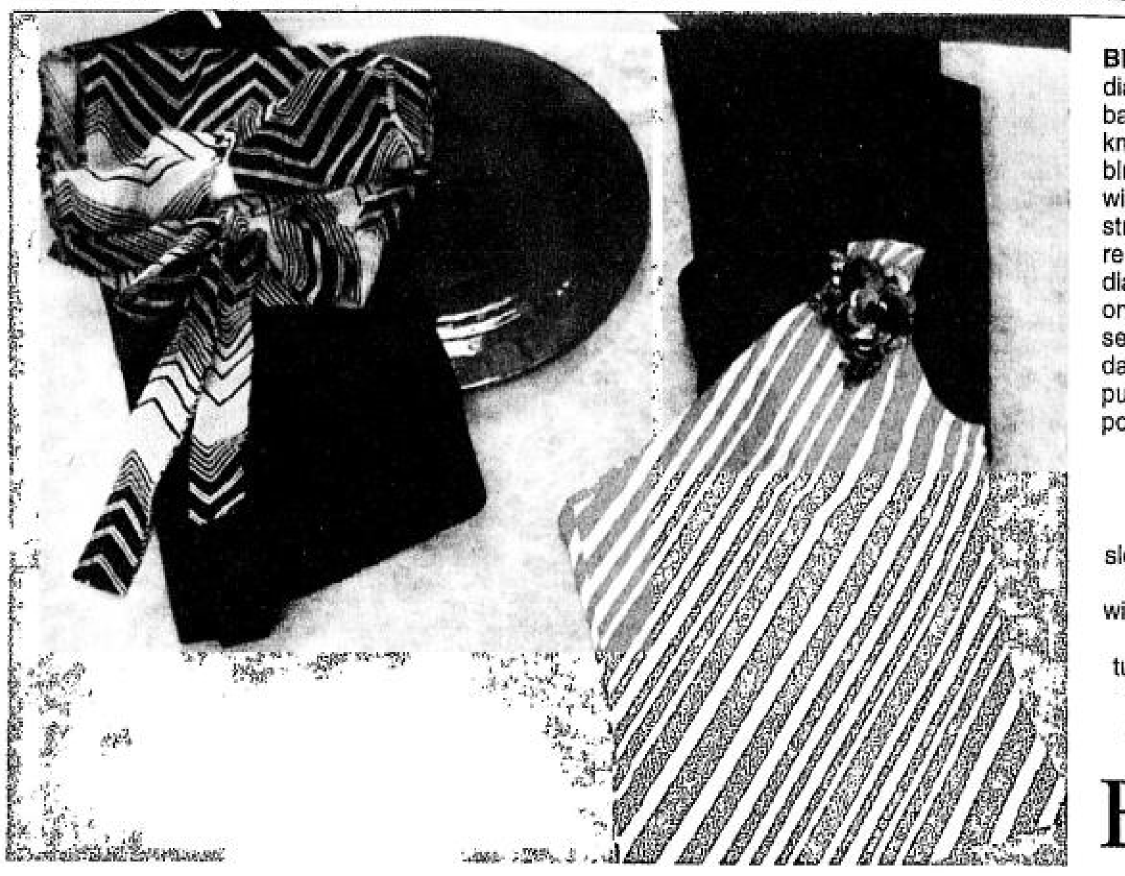
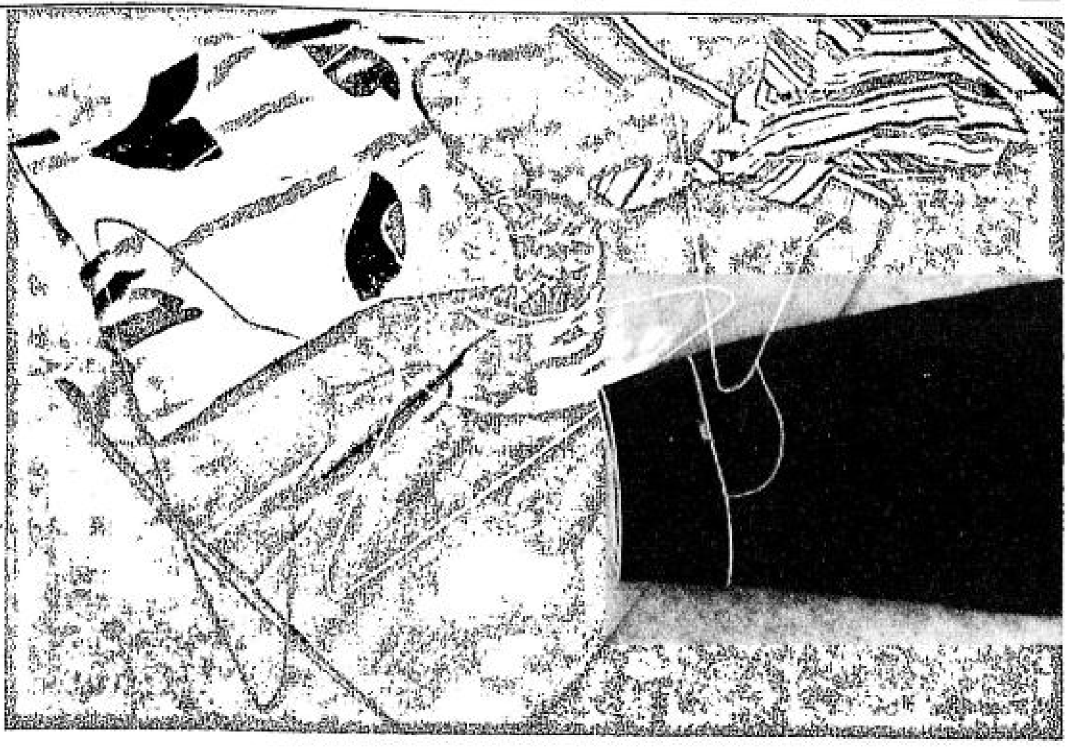


BLUE and white diagonally striped bandeau with side knot (P895); pastel blue knee-length skirt with front pleat and striped waistline; red and white diagonally striped one-sided halter with sequin floral detail; dark denim pants with purple border on pocket (P2,795)

NAVY and white sleeveless top with tie (P1,495); black skirt with side slit (P1,095); pastel-colored, tulip-printed bandeau top (P1,495); denim A-line skirt (P2,595)



Emboldened by color and print

BY CAMILLE CRUZ
PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

THERE is something bold about color, form and print. It usually comes from an artistic perspective when done on a large scale such as on canvass. This time, bold lines and geometric patterns have been captured on fabric.

These days, when a woman wants to dress up, she usually turns to prints even in combination with a little tailored look. It is possible that she is used to the classic, basic clean lines, but occasionally, she will want to turn to prints. Now prints are getting bolder and more geometric.

Topshop, which carries what's hot in London, has plenty of these bold patterns. Arranged by trends, each section was patterned and styled accordingly.

Clothes for specific occasions are easily spotted in Topshop, the place where one can easily pick the look that she wants. The very trendy as well as the conservative can be found there.

Corporate dressing

Putting together the corporate look is easy since there are plenty of knee-length skirts, straight-cut tailored pants that do not flare so much, simply chic blouses or shirts that can go with the outfit for all seasons.

The sporty look is displayed from wall to wall. Whether you choose shorts or a skirt, pink or black, any silhouette is there for you. Colored tube tops in floating geometric shapes can be worn with the many bottoms on display for fitting.

Denim-like bottoms are a great item to wear with a printed top. Usually knee-length, skirts with a semi-A-line figure have a clean cut and centered pleat. They can be worn with a printed bandeau or any fitted top.

Prints go linear as well, not just bold and colorful. They come in black and white diagonal stripes or a combination of bright blue and white. Diagonal stripes can also be in red and white, which provide a powerful contrast to black and white.

Fun prints

Striped prints can be even more fun with an extra piece of detail as part of the top like a metallic floral accent on the strap of a one-shoulder halter top.

Styles for tops still lean toward the bare-most-of-what-you-can side without being too provocative. Some pieces are black-and-white combinations that follow the tailored look but designed to show some skin somewhere.

This is the fun side of dressing—when you step into a place that gives you a variety of options in any style of choice. These are bold and linear times. Try to solve the equation before shifting to another trend.

All items available at Topshop, 2/F Robinsons Place Ermita, Padre Faura Wing

Feminine wiles

MARIELLA Burani's latest collection features billowy skirts in the softest of fabric, sexy smocked tops, bloom-strewn shift dresses in varying hues of purple, orange, blue and green. The black dress is interpreted with dainty flowers accentuated with a ruffled hem and neckline that add a hint of romance to the overall look. There are also dresses in fabrics that playfully hug the body, again splattered with flowers in varied hues and some with a fishtail hem.

Even Burani's Amuletti collection of simple, clean cuts that are hip, young and with a lot of spunk, exude a certain sexiness. A white dress is accentuated only by a zipped front and two pockets, while a shiny brown blouse and skirt ensemble has a thin belt for accent. Another standout is a mustard spaghetti strapped dress with a ruffled hem.

Mariella Burani, one of Italy's most popular and important women designers, combines a deep-seated femininity with strength in her designs. Nothing glitzy really, but dazzling nonetheless. Visit Linea Italia Group's Linea Italia 6750, Prima Linea Greenbelt, Megamall and Cebu, Linea Italia Alabang Town Center and Viva Cebu for Mariella Burani's new collection.

FLOWER POWER. Colorful florals dot this Mariella Burani dress. Available at Linea Italia shops

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